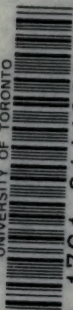


UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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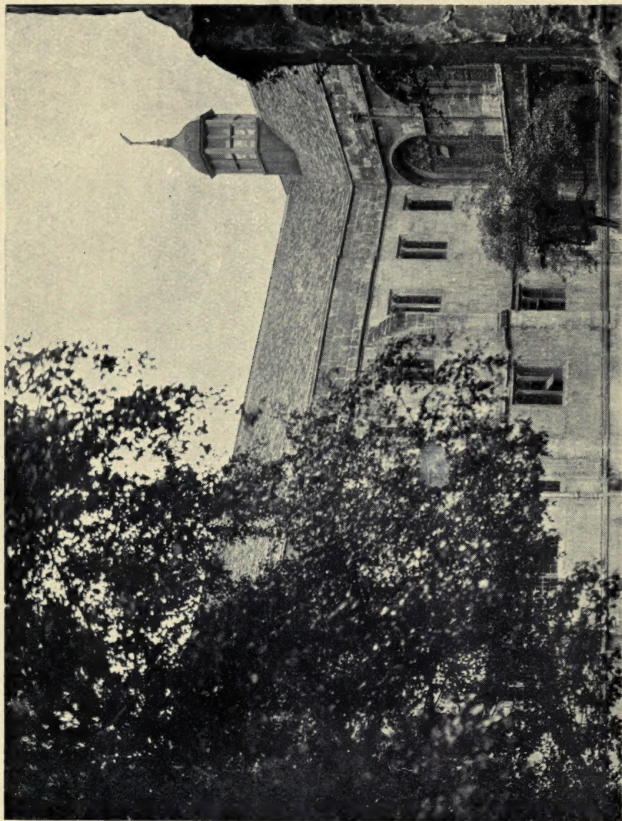








PLATE I



WADHAM COLLEGE LIBRARY FROM GARDEN

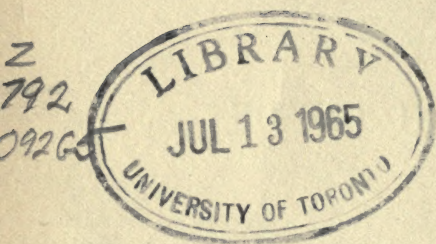
SOME  
OXFORD LIBRARIES

BY  
STRICKLAND GIBSON

*'Funes ceterum merunt mihi in praeclaris'*

HUMPHREY MILFORD  
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS  
LONDON EDINBURGH GLASGOW NEW YORK  
TORONTO MELBOURNE BOMBAY  
1914






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OXFORD : HORACE HART M.A.  
PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY



TO MY FELLOW WORKER  
GEORGE WILLIAM WHEELER M.A.  
WHOSE KINDLY HELP  
FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS  
IS HERE  
GRATEFULLY REMEMBERED



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## PREFACE

THIS little book lays no claim to original research, and is mainly intended for those who wish to learn rather more about the older Oxford Libraries than may be gathered from books of reference and guide-books. Nor does it profess to describe all the Libraries in Oxford, but only those which are most worthy of a visit—the Bodleian, the first Public Library in Europe, and to-day one of the largest in the world; Merton, the oldest in England, and the pattern for all the earlier College Libraries; Corpus, closely connected with the English Renaissance, and one of the most beautiful; St. John's, associated with the greatest of Oxford's Chancellors, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury; the Library of Jesus College, untouched and unchanged, and therefore one of the most precious; Queen's, an ornate and elaborate example on the mediaeval plan; All Souls, an admirable specimen in the Italian style; and the Radcliffe Camera, a noble building of the Georgian age. Other Libraries which appear to promise much have but little to offer. Wadham, beautifully situated in a College grove, has no interior charm; the most interesting fact in its history is that, by the wish of the

Foundress, it was placed above the kitchen for the sake of extra warmth and dryness; Balliol and Magdalen, both fine rooms, were refitted and 'restored' during a devastating revival. As regards the more modern Libraries, *scribantur haec in generatione altera*.

I have to thank Mr. F. Karslake for permission to enlarge and republish in its present form an article on Oxford Libraries which appeared in *Book Auction Records* (vol. viii, pt. 1); the Provost of Queen's for kindly conducting me through his College Library, and giving me the benefit of his deep knowledge; and my colleagues Mr. G. W. Wheeler and Mr. A. H. Kebby for their kindness in reading the proofs, and making many valuable suggestions. The Clarendon Press has supplied three illustrations; Mr. H. Minn, a member of the Oxford Camera Club, a like number; and Mr. Herbert Batsford has generously allowed me to reproduce the view of Corpus Library from Mr. Vallance's *Oxford Colleges*. The remaining illustrations are by my friend Mr. Herbert J. Timms, to whom I am much indebted for his determined and successful efforts to produce photographs worthy of their subjects. Lastly, to Bodley's Librarian and to several College Librarians I have to record my gratitude for privileges accorded me from time to time during a period of many years.

*February, 1914.*



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# I

## THE ANCIENT LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY

OXFORD, nestling as she does among the hills of the Thames Valley, impresses most of her pilgrims by the beauty of her situation. And as from afar spires, pinnacles, and towers are mingled with green fields and woods, so within are Libraries set about with gardens. Bodley's Library overlooks, on its southern and western sides, the lawns of Exeter College; trees of every kind hedge about the Library of Wadham; St. John's Library adjoins one of the most charming of Oxford flower-gardens; and the large window of Magdalen Library faces the deer-park and the walks which have become so intimately associated with the name of Addison. They are removed from the turmoil of busy streets, and the centuries have cast a spell of peace upon them. But not always are the present repositories of books coeval with the collections they contain, and the historian of Oxford Libraries has sometimes to write of buildings and, alas! of books which have long since disappeared. Such a record of migrations and disasters is the history of Exeter College Library,

which, originally perhaps a small temporary structure, was newly built in 1383. All that is known of this new Library is that it had a thatched roof, replaced some years later by a leaden one when Bishop Stafford enlarged the building. In 1624 the books were removed to the old chapel, which then became the Library: this was devastated by fire in 1709, the whole of the inner part being destroyed, and only one stall of books secured. At the end of the eighteenth century the books were again removed to another and larger library, which in turn disappeared when Sir Gilbert Scott erected the present Library in 1855.

But for the most part the Fates have been kind to these ancient Libraries, and when the books have outgrown their original home, the Old Library will oftentimes be found converted to other uses. Cobham's fourteenth century library has become the parish room of St. Mary the Virgin, the beautiful original library of All Souls is now devoted to lectures, and that of Lincoln is the residence of the Sub-Rector. Occasionally a library which has become derelict is discovered by the curious searcher. Such a library is that of Dr. John Browne, who bequeathed his books in the eighteenth century to the Master of University College and his successors. The library originally occupied a ground-floor room in Radcliffe's quadrangle, but when the new Master's house was built a few years ago the library was removed there, and now adorns the larger portion of a white dining-room, where the old cases



have been skilfully refitted to the new walls. But just as a flower, when placed in alien soil, may lose its natural characteristics and take to itself others, so the present value of the Master's library is not one of scholarship, but purely one of colour, and the grey and brown books, in their picturesque confusion, justify their existence by throwing into fine relief the ordered dining-table. To the artist-epicure the benefaction of Dr. John Browne is very precious.

A great misfortune which has overtaken some old libraries in Oxford is to have been refitted in the nineteenth century with varnished oak furniture, conforming generally to what was then considered Gothic style. These libraries, robbed of all their individuality, are depressing alike to antiquary and visitor. Their annals are not written here.

The history of the earliest University Library is closely connected with that of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin. It should be remembered that the University of Oxford was originally an ecclesiastical body. The terminology of its early statutes and legal procedure is not of statute but of canon law. The University was from the beginning of the thirteenth century until the middle of the fourteenth, that is during the most important years of its development, immediately under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Lincoln, in whose diocese it was, and its Chancellor was always a cleric. In these circumstances it is not surprising that a church should find an important place in the history of the University. Until the

fourteenth century the University had no buildings of its own, and all its public business had to be transacted in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, which, although a parish church, was lent to the University for such purposes.

The books belonging to the scholars in their corporate capacity were preserved there in chests, and among those books must have been the earliest recorded gift of books to the University, that of Roger de Insula, who, early in the thirteenth century, gave a copy of the Bible in four parts; not for church purposes, however, but with the express design that scholars might borrow it on sufficient security, and correct their texts by it. Even after the reorganization of Cobham's Library in 1412 a copy of Nicholaus de Lyra's *Commentary on the Bible* was chained in the chancel of the church, and the Chancellor and Proctors were deputed to inspect it yearly. The Church of St. Mary was in fact a kind of University Hall, and its sacred character did not prevent a Chancellor from summoning the taverners there, and compelling them to swear, with their hands on the Holy Gospels, that they would, in so far as their ability and human frailty allowed them, brew for the scholars good and wholesome beer.

It is difficult for us to realize the value that attached to books in early times. In inventories they are classed with plate and jewels: so costly were they that very few students could have possessed them. In the catalogue of the books of William of Wykeham at New College a text-book like Walter Burley's *Commentary on the Physics* of

*Aristotle* is priced at a sum which would now be equivalent to £50; in the same catalogue, expressed in modern currency, a text-book on Natural Philosophy is valued at £40, a copy of St. Augustine's *De civitate Dei* at £63, and of Nottingham *Super quatuor Evangelia* at £133. Access to books was the privilege of the few. No Oxford student, for instance, was admitted to the first University Library who had not spent eight years in studying philosophy, which means that the books possessed by the University were reserved exclusively for its senior members—in short, for the masters who were bound by statute to lecture to their juniors.

During the Middle Ages books were by no means essential to the younger students, who sometimes were no more than twelve years of age when they entered a University. They received instruction orally, literally sitting at the feet of their masters, and many had no more intimate acquaintance with books than might be obtained by carrying those of their teachers backwards and forwards to the lecture-rooms.

And it was so in later times. In the seventeenth century the library of University College was for the use of graduates only, and at Hart Hall no one could enter the library before he was of three years' standing. Not until 1827 were undergraduates admitted to Merton Library, and then but for one hour a week.

Occasionally, however, undergraduates made the acquaintance of their College Library in circumstances little to their liking. Mr. Marmaduke Lodington, of Lincoln College, was in 1600 found

‘guilty of sundry misdemeanours in the town to the great scandal of the College’. His punishment—‘Imprimis, he shall make an oration in the Chapel . . . His theme shall be *Vituperium ebrietatis et vitae dissolutae*. Item, he shall study in the Library four hours certain days for the space of two months [four days a week, except festivals]. His exercise for the first month shall be to gather all the chief questions in the third book of Aristotle *De Anima*, and to set down the full state of them, and this, painfully and studiously done by himself, shall deliver up in writing under his hand unto the Rector and Fellows . . . His exercise for the second month shall be to gather the chief questions of the first book of Aristotle his *Politics*.’

The earliest public University Library about which we have any information is that connected with the name of Thomas Cobham, Bishop of Worcester, who began, in 1320, to build a Convocation House adjoining St. Mary’s Church. To this building he proceeded to add an upper room, and to found a library for the general use of the University. The library was to be in the charge of two chaplains, who were to say masses for the souls of the bishop and his friends, and for University benefactors. The books were to be secured by chains, and no person was to be admitted unless one of the chaplains was present, to which end it was arranged that one should attend before lunch, the other after. They were to take heed that no reader entered in wet clothes, or having pen, ink, or knife: if notes had to be taken they were to be made in pencil.



Bishop Cobham died in 1327, leaving to the University the sum of 350 marks and an extensive collection of MSS. He also left such heavy debts that his executors had to pawn the books for a few pounds in order to pay his funeral expenses. The executors then approached Adam de Brome, in whose hands the bishop had placed the superintendence of his building, and offered him the MSS. if he would redeem them. Adam de Brome, who had just founded his Hall of the Blessed Mary, now called Oriel College, gladly enough accepted their offer, and for the sum of £50 was enabled to fill the shelves of the library of his foundation. It would seem that the College even laid claim to the upper room, and as Adam de Brome was a powerful man and stood well with the King, the University had for a time to acquiesce. Adam de Brome died in 1332, and five years later the Regent masters made a bold and successful bid for the MSS. which were rightly theirs. In formal array they marched on Oriel Library, and intimidating the Fellows with fearful threats, carried off their long desiderated books. It is not quite clear, however, whether the books were actually placed in Cobham's Library, or kept in St. Mary's Church in chests. The dispute between the University and the College remained unsettled till 1410, when Archbishop Arundel compensated Oriel for the loss of the room.

In 1367 we catch another glimpse of Cobham's Library. The original agreement between the executors and the University had apparently been lying, more or less unknown to the graduates of

the University, in the New Chest. Congregation now decreed that the document should be copied into the registers of the Chancellor and Proctors. From this record we learn that as the University by the agreement was compelled to provide a chaplain to take charge of the books, and to say masses for the soul of the pious donor, it had been arranged that a certain number of the more valuable of the MSS. should be sold for £40, from which an income of £3 a year might accrue to the chaplain.

No other details respecting the administration of the first University Library are recorded until 1412, when an elaborate code of statutes was promulgated. They provided that the Librarian, who was to be in holy orders, should once a year hand over to the Chancellor and Proctors the keys of the library : if after visitation he was found to be fit in morals, fidelity, and ability he received them back. Should he desire to resign his office a month's notice was required. His salary was fixed at £5 6s. 8d. a year, for which modest sum he not only took charge of the library, but said masses for the souls of benefactors. He was, however, permitted to claim a robe from every beneficed scholar at graduation. There is a special clause stating that the Proctors should be bound to pay the Librarian's salary half-yearly, for the curious, but very excellent, reason that if his pay were in arrears his care and efficiency might slacken. Lest by too great a number of students the books might receive damage, or study be hindered, admission was restricted to those who had studied



COBHAM'S LIBRARY, CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN  
(The windows were altered in the fifteenth century)



in the schools for eight years, an exception being made in the case of the sons of lords who had seats in Parliament. Moreover, every reader had to subscribe to the following oath: 'You shall swear when you enter the Library of the University, to treat in a reasonable and quiet manner all the books contained therein, and to injure no book maliciously, by erasing, or by detaching sections and leaves.' The library was to be open from 9 till 11 and from 2 till 4, except on Sundays and on the greater Saints' days; and lest too close attention to his duties might affect his health, the Librarian was to be allowed a month's holiday in the Long Vacation. Should a distinguished person visit the library, the hours of opening and closing might be extended from sunrise to sunset—a clause which must have proved burdensome if applied at Midsummer. Lastly, a board was to be suspended in the library on which were to be recorded in a fair and elegant hand the titles of the books, with their donors' names; and all the books were to be closed at night and the windows fastened. These were the rules of the University Library 500 years ago, and some still survive. The University Librarian is still visited annually by the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors, and the declaration made on admission is still couched in similar phraseology. The hours of opening are extended from four hours to six or eight according to the season, but the library still opens at 9 a.m., an hour earlier than most large libraries; and Sir Thomas Bodley's Donation Registers, a board being inadequate, are to this day exhibited in



a public part of the library to the end that 'posterity may be spurred, by the hint of examples, to the emulation of deeds so illustrious'. And lastly, all books and windows are closed at night.

At the time this statute was promulgated the University was torn by the Wyclif controversy, and that none might plead ignorance respecting the Conclusions condemned at London the previous year, the University decreed that all the Conclusions should be entered in a special register in the Public Library, so that principals of Halls and others might easily obtain copies of them. In 1432 a curious ordinance was made for the increase of the library. For the benefit of students of Divinity it was decreed that the doctors of that Faculty should within eight days of their delivery hand over to the University true and faithful copies of the sermons they were by statute obliged to preach, and that bachelors should likewise hand over copies of the examinatory sermons which they delivered on Sundays. The Proctors, under a penalty of two shillings, were to place them in the library, and duly enter their titles in the catalogue.

Two interesting points of library administration, which are not touched on in these statutes, find a place in the fifteenth century code of the Canons Regular of the College of St. Mary of the Augustine Order studying at Oxford. No student might enter the library at night with a candle unless for some really important purpose, or to compose a sermon for which insufficient time had been allowed him. Nor might anyone spend more

than one hour, or two at the very most, over the perusal of any particular book lest others be prevented from studying it, the reason being that what was given for the use of all was by no means to be devoted to the exclusive use of one.

## II

### DUKE HUMFREY'S LIBRARY

FIFTEEN years after the first statutes of the University Library had been promulgated the princely and picturesque figure of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, enters University history. He came upon the scene at a critical time: the University had exhausted its former vigour, it was in dire poverty, and the old learning was outworn. Until his death in 1447 the Duke was the great protector and benefactor of the University, and not the least of his many good deeds was that he brought it into touch with those new ideas which took their inspiration from the revival of classical learning in Italy. He ranks with Sir Thomas Bodley and Archbishop Laud among Oxford benefactors, and has a secure place in our national history as a patron of learning.

The earliest recorded letter of the University addressed to Duke Humfrey was in 1427: he was besought to bring to justice Friar William Melton, who was then going up and down the country preaching, and leading ignorant persons into error. The friar had most willingly obeyed the University's first summons to appear, but when asked to appear a second time, and receive certain approved

sermons for his own use, he wisely declined. The Duke's first recorded gift was in 1435, but it is only known from the University's letter of thanks, which merely mentions in general terms books and money.

Four years later came his first great donation, consisting of one hundred and twenty-nine manuscripts, valued at over a thousand pounds. It is remarkable that only about forty volumes were theological. Among the classical authors are the works of Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, Aulus Gellius, Quintilian, and Apuleius; no fewer than fifty-six volumes are scientific, and of these more than half treat of medicine. The University dispatched two letters of thanks, one to the Duke through the Commons, the other to the donor direct. The former sets forth that 'because our right special lord and mighty prince, the Duke of Gloucester, hath late endowed and so magnified our said University with a thousand pound worth and more of precious books, to the loving of God, increase of clergy and cunning men; to the good governance and prosperity of the Realm of England without end, before all other realms and countries of the world. Wherefore we beseech your sage discretions to consider the glorious gifts of the gracious prince to our said University, for the coming profit and worship of the realm, to thank him heartily and also pray God to thank him in time coming, where good deeds be rewarded. And our Lord God so inspire and govern you to his pleasance with health of soul and body. "Wryte at Oxon . . . All the hole Universite of Oxon."'



The letter to the Duke, which is written in Latin, and in florid language compares the donor with Caesar, states that since the time of Alfred no prince or king had ever made so munificent a gift to the University. The letter ends with a promise to celebrate a mass for the Duke's soul 'tam in vita quam in morte'. In saying that his gift would be a monument, not transitory but eternal, the University endowed its rhetoric with more than usual truth, for although but half a dozen of his books remain in Oxford to-day, his name is for ever attached to the building, which at a later date housed his books, and which is still called Duke Humfrey's Library. The University can no longer, the Church having become the handmaid of the State, fulfil its obligation in praying for the Duke's soul, but the name of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, stands first in the bidding-prayer recited every term in the Church of St. Mary the Virgin.

Within a few weeks of the reception of the gift, statutes were drawn up for the good ordering of the books. A new register was to be made and placed in the Chest of Five Keys. In this register, and in each of the Statute Books of the University, the names of the books, with their contents and the first words of the second leaf, were to be separately, plainly, and expressly registered. No volume was at any time or under any excuse to be sold, given, exchanged, or pledged, nor given out in quires to anyone to copy, nor taken out of the library except for binding or repair. But if the donor should make written application, volumes

might be lent for a specified time. This statute was to be strictly observed, and no grace respecting it could be granted by Congregation. Books used in the study of the Seven Liberal Arts and the Three Philosophies were to be kept apart in a chest, and might be borrowed by masters of Arts lecturing on those subjects : if no lectures were being given the books might be lent to other masters and principals of Halls. But all books so lent were to be under indenture, and the price set on any book was to be above its actual value ; if the book were lost the money was to be promptly paid so that another copy might be provided as quickly as possible. Lastly, on the Feast of SS. Simon and Jude, special mass was to be said for the Duke and his Duchess, and in every sermon delivered at St. Mary's prayers were to be said for the Duke. After his death, on the anniversary, special mass was to be said for his soul and for the souls of all the Faithful Departed.

Two years later, when expressing its thanks for nine more volumes, the University sent a letter in which reference is made to the numerous translations dedicated to Duke Humfrey, and to his successful revival of Greek literature, by which it became possible for them to study Greek authors in the original. At the beginning of the year 1444 the Duke made his greatest donation of MSS. The very titles of the books show that the darkness of the Middle Ages was dispersing before the sun of the Renaissance, which had arisen in all its splendour in Italy. Inscribed in the list are the names of Plato, Aristotle, Ovid,

Livy, Cicero, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The Greek authors were, however, in Latin translations, and the Italian authors only represented in their Latin works. One entry, 'Verba greca, et interpretaciones lingue latine', shows that the study of Greek was then not far off.

The University, while thanking the Duke for his books, suggested that he should assist them to build a library above the Theological School, then approaching completion. It was proposed that the library should be called by his name, and that his books should be kept there separate from those in Cobham's Library, which, right in the heart of the University and within a few yards of the town's busiest thoroughfare, was none too peaceful, and moreover much overcrowded. For at least twenty-five years the University had been collecting money for the purpose of building this School. It remains to-day one of the finest vaulted rooms in the kingdom, and is remarkable for the beauty and fancy of its carving. The building, as originally designed, was to have been superlatively elaborate, but the execution involving too great an expenditure, Thomas Elkyn, the stonemason, was informed that certain influential persons did not approve, nay actually condemned, the extreme elaboration of the work. He was therefore requested to retrench in the matter of canopies for images, casements, fillets, and in other unnecessary *frivolis curiositatibus*, which not only put the University to great expense, but also greatly retarded the completion of the work.

To the suggestion that he should add another

PLATE III



BODLEY'S LIBRARY—INTERIOR  
(Duke Humfrey's Library from the Arts End)





story to this beautiful building the Duke liberally responded, and a letter of thanks sent to him in 1447 records what the University had done to commemorate his benefactions. A fortnight later Humfrey died. A few weeks previous, the Duke, when present in the House of Congregation, had promised another large donation—his 'Latin books' as he called them. The University from the first anticipated difficulty in obtaining them, and at once addressed letters to the King, John Somerset, and William of Waynflete, begging their assistance. To the Marquess of Suffolk they wrote 'that inasmuch as the Duke of Gloucester, now late passed to God, a little before his death granted to our University of Oxenford all his books of study, also other books longing to school matter, like as we be informed by faith and credible persons, and moreover granted the same with his own mouth, here in a time of a Convocation in our Semyly House, before divers doctors and masters and othernoteable, many more graduate men being in his presence, we might recover and have these said books; the which was to us most special and singular treasure; concerning the great well disposed multitude of scholars and the great penury of books that be among us'. Three years later the University addressed a letter to T. Bokelonde, Squier, in which it is stated that the Duke 'gave and bequeathed unto us in his testament, late before his decease, all the Latin books that he had, and also one hundred pounds; to the edifying of our Divinity School . . . of the which goods we have no thing yet received'.

A letter was also sent to John Somerset, who lay under suspicion of withholding the books, in which he was invited to clear his character. Two years later the University was writing fulsome letters of thanks to the same John Somerset for a gift of books, and vestments embroidered with gold. It is impossible that these should have been Duke Humfrey's books, because the University, at a later date, wrote to the Bishop of Bath and Wells asking his assistance in recovering the books which, on their dispersal, had come into private hands.

Meanwhile, far from erecting a second story on the Divinity School, the University was obliged to leave the School itself unfinished. Many letters requesting money were sent forth, but to little purpose. At length, when all resources seemed to have failed, the University approached Thomas Kempe, Bishop of London, who made the munificent donation of one thousand marks. Scaffolding was borrowed from William of Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, who was just completing his splendid foundation of Magdalen College, and leave was asked from the King to employ workmen whom he had lent to the Bishop. In 1481 the University wrote to the Bishop of London, telling him of the busy scenes which take place at the school—how some fetch stones, others polish them; some carve the statues, and others place them in their niches. Eight years later both school and library were finished, and after the books had been removed from Cobham's Library to the more spacious foundation of Duke

Humfrey, the earlier library passed away. The seats and desks were removed to the School of Canon Law, and the room was left bare. After many vicissitudes, Cobham's Library is to-day the parish-room of St. Mary's, and the room below, once the Convocation House, which should be one of the most sacred places in the University, is now a storeroom for crumbling statuary.

The subsequent history of Duke Humfrey's Library is scanty enough. Leland visited it about 1540, and compiled a list of some thirty volumes he saw there. In 1550 the Commissioners of Edward VI utterly despoiled it. Wood records that 'some of those books so taken out by the Reformers were burnt, some sold away for Robin Hoods pennyworths, either to Booksellers, or to Glovers to press their gloves, or Taylors to make measures, or to Bookbinders to cover books bound by them, and some also kept by the Reformers for their own use'. Thus in an outburst of religious fury the munificent benefactions of Good Duke Humfrey and his compeers were swept away. Only three of the Duke's books have been restored to the Bodleian: the *Letters* of Nicholas de Clemenges (MS. Hatton 36), the *Letters* of the Younger Pliny (Auct. F. 2. 23), and Bruni's translation of Aristotle's *Politics* (Auct. F. 5. 27); and out of his entire library only twenty-nine books have been definitely identified as having belonged to him. Of these the most remarkable for their beauty are the *Psalter* in the possession of Mr. H. Yates Thompson, a *Bible History* in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the *Roman History* of Livy



in the Bibliothèque de St<sup>e</sup>. Geneviève at Paris. The finest of those readily accessible in England is the *Psalter* in the British Museum (Royal MS. 2. B. i). In 1556 the University appointed a committee to effect the sale of the empty shelving of Duke Humfrey's Library. Thenceforward all that remained was a 'great desolate room'.

### III

#### BODLEY'S LIBRARY

*Dilexi decorem domus tuæ  
et locum habitationis gloriæ tuæ.*

ON March 2, in the year 1545, there was born at Exeter, Thomas Bodley, 'descended, both by Father and Mother, of worshipful parentage'. His father in the reign of Queen Mary 'was so cruelly threatened, and so narrowly observed by those that maliced his Religion, that for the Safeguard of himself . . . he knew no way so secure, as to fly into Germany'. He first settled at Wesel with his wife and children, afterwards removed to Frankfurt, and finally fixed his abode in the city of Geneva. There Thomas Bodley attended the lectures of Chevalerius in Hebrew, Beroaldus in Greek, and Calvin and Beza in Divinity. On the accession of Queen Elizabeth the family returned to England, and settled down in London. At the age of fourteen Thomas Bodley was sent to Oxford, where he matriculated at Magdalen College in 1559. His contemporary, the 'ever memorable John Hales', has testified to his energy, industry, his knowledge of many tongues, and his marvellous charm of character. The University

recognized his administrative powers by electing him Proctor, and his literary ability by conferring upon him the office of Public Orator.

In 1576, however, Bodley waxed desirous to travel beyond the seas, and spent four years in Italy, France, and Germany. Nine years later he entered the diplomatic service, and was entrusted with several important missions, in which he gained for himself considerable reputation. On his retirement, which was largely due to the jealousy existing between Burghley and the Earl of Essex, 'his thoughts turned back to Oxford and the "people of the gown", to the home of early cares and affections: he noted how decay had invaded the haunt of Learning, and that the spot which is the seat of Muses lay now overrun not by the moth and the worm only but almost by the briar and the wildwood: and he meditated a benefaction not for the scholar only but for the scholar's walls and roofs. He would stay the wreck, drive the waste away, rescue from destruction the great buildings of old founders as lovingly as they had been raised of old, and bring back to the Muses whom the savagery of the past had driven into banishment, the flow of life and blood and their ancient birthright of a home.'

On February 23, 1598, Bodley wrote a letter to the Vice-Chancellor in which he offered to take upon himself the charge and cost of restoring the Public Library to its former use 'and to make it fitte, and handsome with seates, and shelfes, and deskes, and all that may be needfull, to stirre up other mens benevolence, to helpe to furnish it

with bookes'. In his autobiography he has expressed the same intention in a well-known passage: 'I concluded at the last, to set up my Staffe at the Librarie dore in Oxon; being throwghly perswaded, that in my solitude, and surcease from the Commonwealth affayers, I could not busie myselfe to better purpose, then by redusing that place (which then in every part laye ruined and wast) to the publique use of Studients.' The re-fitting, which proved more costly than had been anticipated, occupied two years; the gathering of books began in 1600, the first Librarian, Thomas James, was appointed, and the library formally opened on November 8, 1602. Its appearance has been described by Anthony Nixon in Oxford's *Triumph*:

'It hath a verie long, large, and spacious walk, ouer the schoole of Diuinite, interseamed on both sides, from the one ende vnto the other, very thicke with severall Partitions, with certain seates and Deskes before them to sitte downe vpon and reade. These partitions are in euerie place filled full of shelues, and vnto the shelues are there many Bookes fastened with chaines of Iron: euerie volume bearing his name and title, written on paper or parchement, in faire Roman letters, and euerie partition hath an Inscription of the Faculties, As whether her bookes bee either of Theologie, Philosophie, Astronomie, Geometry, or any other Art, &c.

Gifts, both of books and money, flowed in from all quarters, among the first benefactors being the Lords Buckhurst, Hunsdon, Montacute, Lisle, and Lumley. A kind of epidemic of book-giving set

in, and those who had few or no books of their own to give, gave those of others. Thomas James laid toll on College libraries, principally New College, and became an honoured benefactor. Thomas Allen gave twenty MSS. of doubtful provenance, one having been stolen from New College only two years previously. The Dean and Chapter of Exeter gave, with questionable legality, eighty-one of their MSS., many of them very precious, one being a Missal given to the Cathedral by Bishop Leofric in the reign of Edward the Confessor, the alienation of which still rankles in the minds of the successors of the original donors. James I also expressed a wish to share in Bodley's good work, promising him a choice of books from the Royal collections, but took great care to allow it to remain a good intention. The King graciously presented, at a later date, two copies of his own works.

The record of all these and subsequent donations will be found entered in two large massively bound registers, which repose on the Librarian's table, and which are familiar to most Bodleian visitors. Sir Thomas Bodley gave much thought to the compilation of his Register, and drafted a title for it himself, although, as he informed Thomas James, his 'Latin was rusty for the want of using'. Great care was taken to ensure its safe arrival from London, from whence it was dispatched 'packed up in a coffin of boards, with paper thick about it, and hay between it and the boards'.

But Sir Thomas Bodley did not rely wholly



on donations for the increase of his library. His agent, John Bill, visited Paris, Venice, Ferrara, Verona, Brescia, Mantua, Pavia, Milan, Florence, Pisa, Rome, and also Seville, from which latter town he 'brought good store of books. His purpose was at first, to have visited all other like places, and Universities, where any books were to be gotten : But the people's usage towards all of our nation, is so cruel and malicious, as he was utterly discouraged for this time.'

The Founder had very decided views as to what books should be preserved in his library. In a letter to James he thus expresses them :

'I can see no good reason to alter my opinion, for excluding suche bookes, as almanackes, plaies, and an infinit number, that are daily printed, of very unworthy matters and handling, suche as, methinkes, both the keeper and under-keeper should disdain to seeke out, to deliver unto any man. Happely some plaies may be worthy the keeping : But hardly one in fortie. For it is not alike in Englishe plaies, and others of other nations : because they are most esteemed, for learning the languages and many of them compiled, by men of great fame, for wisdom and Learning : which is seldom or never seene among us. Were it so againe, that some litle profit might be reaped (which God knowes is very litle) out of some of our playbookes, the benefit thereof will nothing neere counter-vaile, the harme that the Scandal will bring unto the Librarie, when it shalbe given out, that we stuff'd it full of baggage bookes. And though they should be but a few, as they would be very many, if your course should take place, yet the having of those few (such is the nature of malicious reports) would be mightily multiplied, by suche as purpose to speake in

disgrace of the Librarie. This is my opinion, wherein if I erre, I think I shall erre with infinit others: and the more I thinke upon it, the more it doth distast me, that suche kinde of bookes, should be vouchsafed a rowme, in so noble a Librarie.'

One of the most remarkable things about this declaration is that it was written at the very time when Shakespeare had reached the maturity of his genius; and strangely enough Bodley's Library has become world-famous for precisely the kind of literature Bodley himself banned. If the presentation of 'riff-raff books' was to be discouraged, what would have been the Founder's horror if he could have seen the donations of succeeding generations, among them being a sea-elephant, a crocodile, a whale, a skull, a mummy, a skeleton, a tanned human skin, a dried body of a negro boy, and a negro baby in spirit! Fortunately all these have disappeared, but the library still possesses among its odds and ends a *calculus vesicae humanae* of respectable antiquity.

Eight years after the formal opening of the library that portion known as the Arts End was built, and at the same time, on being approached by Sir Thomas Bodley, the Stationers' Company promised to present to the library one perfect copy of every book printed by its members, an arrangement which obtained until the Copyright Act of 1709 entitled the Bodleian to claim a copy of every published book. This agreement with the Stationers' Company was suggested by Thomas James. In a letter to him Bodley says: 'For the Stationers gift, I am of your opinion, that it is to

be accounted a Gift of good moment : and I think I had hardly thought upon it, if you had not moved the matter at first ; For the effecting whereof, I have found notwithstanding many Rubs and Delays '. This suggestion, which brought to the library such books as the First Folio of Shakespeare, is James's chief claim to the gratitude of posterity. James is also to be commended for his desire to help specially the younger students, with which object in view he proposed to Sir Thomas Bodley the formation of what would now be called an Undergraduates' Library. Sir Thomas Bodley viewed the proposal with little favour : ' your device for a library for the younger Sort ', he writes, ' will have many great exceptions, and one of special force, that there must be another keeper ordained for that place. And where you mention the younger Sort, I know what books should be bought for them, but the Elder, as well as the Younger, may have often occasion to look upon them : and if there were any such, they cannot require so great a Renown. In effect, to my Understanding, there is much to be said against it, as undoubtedly yourself will readily find, upon further consideration.' When James retired from the library he still retained his interest in the ' younger sort ', and compiled a classified index for such as were studying Arts.

It must be obvious to every one who reads Sir Thomas Bodley's letters that during the first eleven years of the library's existence he took a far larger share in its organization than did his Librarian. Although James, who had published

an edition of the *Philobiblon* of Richard de Bury and a Catalogue of manuscripts in Oxford and Cambridge, had at first shown promise of being an ideal Librarian, he proved otherwise. Bodley was an exigent master, and James a careless cataloguer. James, too, had little taste for routine work, and deplored the lack of time for study. Almost at the beginning he applied for an increase of salary; shortly afterwards he asked Bodley's permission to marry, and that after his master had made celibacy a condition of his office. Brian Twyne, the famous Oxford historian, passed these strictures upon him: 'Item that Mr. James would frequent his place more diligently, keepe his houres, remoue away his superfluous papers lienge scattered about the desks, and shewe himselfe more pliable and facill in directinge of the students to their bookes and purposes.'

To the founding of his library Sir Thomas Bodley brought the mind of a scholar, the training of a diplomatist, and the common sense of a man of business. His care for the *minutiae* of administration was remarkable. The ambiguous shape of a written letter of the alphabet did not escape him, and his knowledge of the ways of 'carpenters, joyners, carvers, glaziers, and all that idle rabble' was considerable. He would give precise instructions how the books should be dusted, and how the library should be cleaned, recommending that the floor be rubbed with 'a little Rosemary; for a stronger scent I should not like'. As a diplomatist Bodley knew how best to approach great personages, and realized how much depends on



first impressions. He deprecated the sending of letters to persons of importance by the common carrier. He suggested the desirability of dedicating the library catalogue to Prince Henry, rather than to the King, who would doubtless think it no new thing, and on the occasion of a royal visit he advised his Librarian to conform to the King's pronunciation of *i* and *au*. Wealthy as he was, he rebelled vehemently against overcharges, however trivial. He would, for instance, by no means assent to pay the small sums incurred for 'cleaning of the court beneath, or for bringing in the sand—impertinent charges', which in his opinion should have been paid by the University. This great and princely man died in 1613, and was buried with much pomp in Merton College Chapel at a cost of nearly one thousand pounds. By his will he left sufficient money to build the West End, now the Selden End, and the third story, now the Picture Gallery. Among University benefactors his name will always be the most revered, and the monument which he reared to himself will perpetuate his name for ever.

Thomas James continued in office for seven years after Bodley's death. On his resignation the Curators appointed in his stead John Rous, one of the most attractive figures in Bodleian history. He was a graceful scholar and a personal friend of Milton, whose estimate of him is inscribed in a volume which Milton presented to the library—'Doctissimo viro proboque librorum aestimatori Ioanni Rousio.' Another eminent scholar,



Lambecius, puts into his mouth the words, 'Mentiri nescio, librum si malus est nequeo laudare.' Rous held office during the whole of the troublous period of the Civil War, and was respected by both Royalist and Parliamentarian. Although he firmly, but courteously, refused to lend King Charles a book from the library, he nevertheless subscribed the comparatively large sum of £50 towards the funds of the King, and was specially confirmed in his office of Librarian by the Parliamentary visitors of Cromwell.

During his period of office the West End of the library was built, and many important collections of MSS. were received. The Earl of Pembroke presented a precious collection of Greek manuscripts formed by Giacomo Barocci, a Venetian, the loss of which to Italy was deeply deplored by Cardinal Barberini. The collection, which consists of two hundred and forty-two volumes, was bought for £700, and forwarded to the library by William Laud, then Bishop of London. The letter which was dispatched to the Vice-Chancellor respecting them contains some very sensible recommendations :

' Mye Lord was once purposed to haue them bound heare, but it was hard to find whome to trust with them, or whome wee should put to that paines to be a continuall overseer. If they should be mesplaced in the bindinge, it wear as much as manye of them wear worth, it would be soe hard to rectifye them againe. I thinke thearfore the safest waye will be to page them before they be taken asunder for newe bindinge. Mye Lord would haue them bound plain, and as like

their old felowes as maye be . . . I maye not omit to informe you to, that some of these bookes ar much worne with aige, and the leters in some places growne dimme, and if in some reasonable tyme they be not transcribed they will be lost to anye use. When they ar transcribed, the olde cotype and the newe maye be sett togeather.'

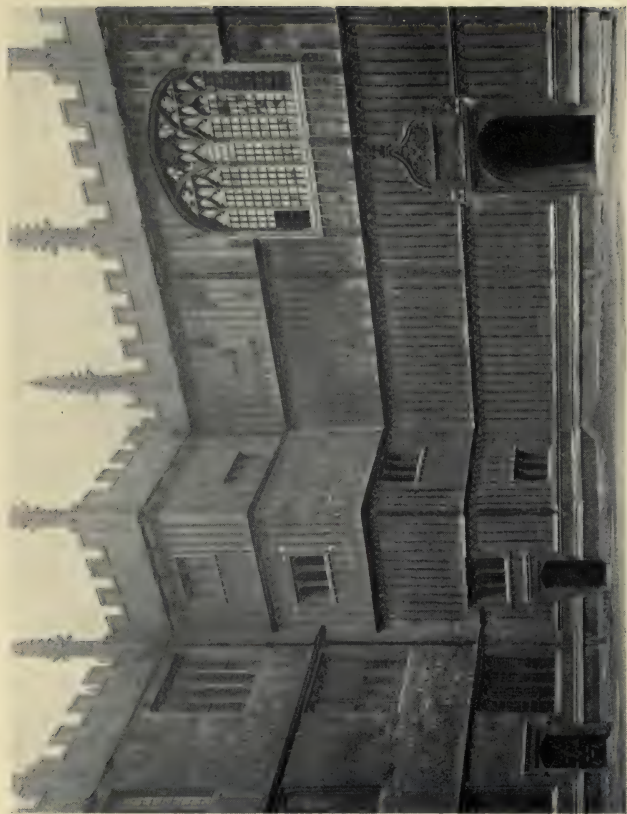
Sir Kenelm Digby gave 238 MSS., among them being a considerable number of valuable early scientific works. He contemplated another benefaction, but at his death his library, which was then in France, was confiscated by the French King, and sold for 10,000 crowns. In 1635 the first large donation of MSS. was received from Archbishop Laud, who in five years gave about 1,300 MSS., one of the most munificent gifts ever received by the University. To record the chief treasures of this collection would occupy too much space here. Some of the most notable are exhibited in the show-cases; among them are the famous seventh century MS. of the *Acts of the Apostles*, probably once possessed by the Venerable Bede, and the equally famous *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

During the Civil War the library escaped harm save for the 'borrowing' by Charles I of £500 from Bodley's Chest. Oxford was besieged by the Parliamentary forces in 1646, and on its capitulating General Fairfax immediately 'set a good guard of soldiers to preserve the Bodleian Library. . . . He was a lover of learning, and had he not taken this special care that noble library had been utterly destroyed, for there were ignorant senators

enough who would have been contented to have had it so.' This was not the only good service Fairfax did the Library. Some years later he presented a valuable collection of MSS., which included the collections of Dodsworth, a name held in high esteem by genealogists. Cromwell himself gave some Greek MSS., and like Charles I, on being refused the loan of a book, acquiesced in the refusal when the Founder's Statutes had been communicated to him. Bodley's Library, therefore, suffered less from the Protector than from the King, a fact which should be remembered by Royalist Oxford.

The most important donation received during the Commonwealth was the library of John Selden, the great jurist. It was withheld from the University during Selden's lifetime because, it is said, of his displeasure at hearing that the intruded fellows of Magdalen College had divided among themselves a sum of money which had been set apart as the Founder's Fund. On Selden's death the books to the number of 8,000 were handed over to the University by his executors. Some of the most valuable of his MSS., 'eight chests full of the registers of abbeys, and other manuscripts relating to the history of England', were never received by the University, perishing some years later in a disastrous fire at the Temple. The last quarter of the seventeenth century is marked by the gift of the Hatton and Junius MSS., both collections being particularly rich in Anglo-Saxon MSS. Among the former is a copy of King Alfred's version of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*,

PLATE IV



BODLEY'S LIBRARY—EXTERIOR





and among the latter 'Caedmon's' metrical paraphrase of Genesis, a book unique in the true sense of the word. Two great collections of Oriental MSS., those of Pococke and Huntington, were purchased for £1,300 in 1693.

## IV

### BODLEY'S LIBRARY (*continued*)

THE visitor who walks round the Bodleian Quadrangle will notice that the inscriptions over the doors indicate not library collections, but various schools of learning. The rooms are in fact the old lecture halls and examination schools arranged on the mediaeval plan. On either side of the Tower of Five Orders, the main entrance to the Quadrangle, are the schools of Arts divided into the *Trivium* embracing the elementary subjects of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic, and the more difficult *Quadrivium* embracing Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. Although the University of Oxford has for seven centuries been grounded in Arts, yet graduation in that Faculty was not considered until recent times a goal, but only an introduction to one of the three superior Faculties of Theology, Law, or Medicine. The School of the chief of these, Theology, faces the Quadrangle Gateway, and is flanked by the Faculties of Medicine and Law. The Schools, with the exception of the Divinity School, were built at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and have gradually been absorbed by the Bodleian Library as storerooms.

One of these schools, that of Geometry, is the stage on which an historic scene was once enacted. Charles II, hard pressed by the Commons as to the Bill excluding the Duke of York from the Succession, summoned his fifth Parliament at Oxford, where there was at least a congenial Tory atmosphere. The King and his Court took up their residence at Christ Church, Corpus, and Merton. The Lords sat in the Geometry School, the Commons in the Convocation House. The Commons, quite impervious to the spirit of the place, were in their most truculent mood, and another Revolution seemed imminent. On March 28, 1681, 'the King, having had notice how vigorously the Parliament proceeded on Friday and Saturday (directly opposit to what he desired in his speech) did about ten of the clock in the morning send for his robes and crowne privatly, the former they say in a sedan, the other under a cloake. Half an hour after, sending for the Speaker and Commons dissolved (without ceremony of attendance, as heralds, &c.) the Parliament, to the amazement of all.' The Parliament Room is now divided by two walls, and comprises the Sanskrit Room, the Oriental MSS. Room, and the Hebrew Room. The staircase by which the King and the Lords entered is now the Malone staircase. The Commons, who entered through a little door in the Tower of Five Orders, had to crowd up a very narrow winding staircase leading into the present Mason Room, from which access to the old Parliament Room is given by a short flight of steps.

Six years later a King was again at Oxford. James II had come to compel the contumacious Fellows of Magdalen College to elect his nominee as President. The King's first choice, Anthony Farmer, had been proved to be disreputable: his second, Bishop Parker, was said by the Fellows to be impossible, as the office of President had been filled by Bishop Hough. The King arrived in Oxford on September 3 to deal sternly with the Fellows of Magdalen, and on September 5 the University invited the King to a breakfast in the Bodleian Library. Anthony Wood, who was an eye-witness, has left the following account of the ceremony:

‘The King came up into the Library between 10 and eleven, attended by the Vicechancellor and Doctors, besides severall of the Lords. Afterwards going forward, proctor Bennet delivered a short Latin speech to him, wherein he “hoped that his Majesty would be good to ecclesia Anglicana”: ’twas by the globes. Which being done, his Majesty pluckd off his glove and gave him his hand to kiss, and turning himself to the terrestriall globe, shewd to one of the courtiers (a lord) the passage between America and the back part of China, by which way certain ships had passage, which his Majesty mentioned. From thence he went to the lower end of the Library, scil. to that part calld Selden's Library; where he found a banquet ready prepared for him at the south end of the Library, with a seat of state at the south end of the table; none did eat but he, for he spake to nobody to eat.

Dry sweetmeats and fruits, 20 large dishes, piled high, like so many ricks of hay.

Wet sweetmeats, 24 little flat plates, like trencher

plates, not piled; placed among the greater dishes scattering in vacant places to fill up the vacancies.

28 large dishes of cold fish and cold flesh, as Westphalia hams, &c.: some whole, others cut out into slices and piled pretty high.

3 hot dishes, viz. shoulder of mutton, pheasant, partridge and quails; of these the King did eat, not meddling with any thing else, except only that he took one little piece of dry sweetmeat.

36 plates of sallating, piled high and copped, viz. oranges, lemons, olives, samphire, &c., pears, plums, &c.

This ambique or banquet cost the University £160. He liked the wine well; whereupon they sent some after him.

After his Majesty was sate, he asked the Vice-Chancellor (standing by him) for certain books. To which the Vice-Chancellor answered that Dr. Hyde the library-keeper could answer him more fully than he. Whereupon he was called from the other part of the library where his study was, and being come, he kneeled downe, whereupon the king gave him his hand to kiss. Which being done, his Majesty said, "Well, Dr. Hyde, was the Chinese here?" To which he answered, "Yes, if it may please your Majesty; and I learned many things of him." Then said his Majesty, "He was a little blinking fellow, was he not?" To which he answered "Yes", and added that "all the Chineses, Tartars, and all that part of the world was narrow-eyed". Then the King said that "he had his picture to the life hanging in his room next to the bed chamber". Then his Majesty told Dr. Hyde of a book of Confucius translated from China language by the Jesuits (4 in number) and asked whether it was in the Library, to which Dr. Hyde answered that it was, and that "it treated of philosophy, but not so as that of European philosophy". Whereupon his Majesty asked whether "the Chineses had any divinity?" To



which Dr. Hyde answered, "Yes, but 'twas idolatry, they being all heathens, but yet that they have in their idol-temple statues representing the Trinity, and other pictures, which shew that antient Christianity had been amongst them". To which he assented by a nod. After that, his Majestie left off asking any more questions. Onlie turning his eyes up toward bishop Laud's MSS. on his right hand, Dr. Hyde told him that those books, which were all MSS., were given by Archbishop Laud.

After the King had don his breakfast, they began to scramble after what was remaining, flung the wet sweetmeats on the ladies' linnen and petticoats and stained them, insomuch that the King being not able to pass away for the crowd, stayed there awhile, and talked with some by him. Dr. Derham, a physitian of Magdalen Hall, was noted here for a scrambler, being in his scarlet, so notorious that they flung things in his face.'

A German student and traveller, Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, has left a very lively description of Oxford life at the beginning of the eighteenth century. He relates, with some surprise, that the Bodleian was much frequented by visitors, among them boors and women, who stared at the library like a cow at a new gate. The chief objects of interest were two small, worm-eaten loaves from the siege of Oxford; Queen Elizabeth's shoe without a heel; a skeleton of a pygmy; a map of China; the dried hand of a Siren; the Devil's alphabet; and Joseph's coat. No one could touch a book or see anything without giving a tip to Crabb, the under-Librarian, who hurried visitors through the library pointing this way and that, 'Here are the theological books',

'Here are the MSS.'. His fee for showing Uffenbach the Barocci MSS. was one guinea. Even more objectionable than Crabb was Hudson, the chief Librarian, who not only was ready to receive tips, but drove such a thriving trade with Bodleian duplicates that he was popularly known as the 'Bookseller'. His favourite exclamation was 'He, he, he', a mannerism which particularly annoyed Uffenbach.

The dominant personality in Bodleian history during the early years of the eighteenth century was Thomas Hearne, Sub-Librarian, antiquary, and staunch non-juror. He was the author of a famous Diary wherein all the literary news, scandal, and gossip of his day are recorded. His career at the Bodleian was not a smooth one. He detested Hudson, the Librarian, and his assistant, the 'pert jackanapes' Bowles; both malicious Whigs. But Hearne, good antiquary that he was, sometimes committed indiscretions, as when he exhibited a portrait of the Pretender to a visitor whom he took to be a Royalist, but who, alas! was a 'rebell'. Moreover, he made injudicious political remarks in the preface of one of his antiquarian works. The consequence was that the Curators of the Library dispensed with his services, and in order more effectually to keep out the irrepressible Hearne, Hudson put new locks on the doors. Hearne proved an uncommonly good hater, and the characters of Hudson and Bowles are blackened for all time. On the death of the latter Hearne managed, doubtless on the principle *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, to refer to him in his Diary as

a 'gentleman', but guarded himself by adding, in brackets, 'a most vile wicked wretch'.

Shortly after Bowles's death a cruel revenge was taken on poor Hearne by his old enemy and successor to the office of janitor, Bilston. In 1729, among the MSS. of Francis Cherry which then came into the library, was found a paper in Hearne's writing giving reasons for taking the Oath of Allegiance. Bilston immediately printed the work, imitating the *format* of Hearne's own editions, under the title of *A vindication of those who take the oath of Allegiance*, to which he prefixed a sarcastic and rather amusing preface. He gives as his reason for printing the work that it might be 'a standing monument of its Author's early talent at reasoning as well as proof of his proficiency in History when considered as pen'd at the age of twenty two', but he adds that 'how he became dissatisfied in this Affair since shall not be my business to enquire'. Hearne had previously tried to recover his MS. from the library, giving as his reason that 'the arguments that then satisfied me are far from doing so now. I look upon them as weak and frivolous, and I am so much dissatisfied with this MS., of mine, that if they will keep it from me, I nevertheless revoke every paragraph, line, word, letter, and tittle in it, and consign it over to the fire. When I was a childe, I spake as a childe, I understood as a childe, I thought as a childe; but when I became a man I put away childish things.'

Uffenbach relates that Hearne was 'very mean to look at'. It is one of the ironies of Hearne's

life that as an official of the greatest Public Library in Europe he was compelled to show to visitors Joseph's coat, the mummied blackamoor, and the stuffed crocodile. He took more than a student's legitimate interest in politics, and unwisely committed the political views of his youth to writing. He had no overwhelming love for the human race, and frequently characterized a quite respectable gentleman as an 'old, hypocritical, ambitious, drunken sot', or as a 'most horrid, conceited, proud, cock-brained, ill natur'd Fellow'; on the other hand, he showed real affection for old books, Roman roads, and ruins. Hearne was rather more than ordinarily vain, a good antiquary, and a better judge of records than of men.

The hundred and one years from 1736 to 1837 are remarkable in the annals of the library for the number of valuable bequests received. The first of these was that of Thomas Tanner, Bishop of St. Asaph, whose MSS., which include the Sancroft and Nalson papers, are especially rich in material bearing on the Great Civil War. The printed books are noteworthy for the large number of black-letter tracts contained among them, the most precious being the unique *Ars moriendi* printed by Caxton. When Tanner was removing his books to Oxford by river several of the packing-cases fell into the water, and many of his books in consequence have suffered considerably.

The year 1753 is marked by a bequest and a donation of State-papers. The former was received in 1759 from the great-grandchildren of the Earl of Clarendon, author of the *History of the Great*



*Rebellion.* They form, perhaps, the most valuable collection of State-papers possessed by the Bodleian, and include documents of the highest importance and interest. Among them are the notes written by Charles II and Clarendon during meetings of the Privy Council. The notes, which are scribbled on rough pieces of paper never intended for preservation, were passed backwards and forwards across the table by the King and his Chancellor, and plainly show the very intimate relations existing between them. The following are specimens of the written dialogues :

(*Clarendon.*) If you do not a little thinke with yourselfe, for the conductinge your Scotch affayre in the Parliamēt, it will not do itselfe.

(*King.*) I think the great difficulty will be in the house of Commons by whome the mony must be provided, therfore do you speake with those members who come to you and lett them know my mynde, I will do the like to all I see.

(*Clarendon.*) It will be fitt to speake with you a litle, for sure you did not enough make your minde knowne heare yesterday, and I doubte the house of Peeres more then I do, the house of Comons.

In 1662 the Russian Ambassador arrived in London with presents for the King in which were included rich furs, hawks, carpets, cloths of tissue, sea-horse teeth, and a pelican. Clarendon seems to have feared that Lady Castlemaine would ask for some of the more valuable gifts. Hence the following notes :

(*Clarendon.*) You know you do now euery day expecte the Muscovite Ambassadors, who brings with them seuerall valewable toyes as a present to you :



Now ther goes no extraordinary witt, to make this discouery, and to begg this present before it comes.

I pray remember the entertayninge these Ambassadors will be chargeable to you, and therfore if this suite be made to you, as sure it will be, I pray say, you are ingaged, and so keepe it to your selfe, that what is to bee sold, may discharge the expences. I hope you have [not] given it away already.

(*King.*) You neede not have given me this caution, for I loue to keepe my selfe warm with the furs and for the other parte of the present will be as necessary for other things.

The great donation of 1753 came from Thomas Carte, the historian, who began in that year to forward to the library his valuable and voluminous collection of State-papers, which were largely drawn from the Ormonde archives at Kilkenny Castle. They comprise 250 very thick volumes, mostly in folio.

Two years later, the largest single donation ever received by the Bodleian came by bequest of Richard Rawlinson, the non-juring bishop. There were 5,000 MSS. and 2,000 printed books. Richard Rawlinson was the brother of Thomas Rawlinson, an equally famous book-collector, who accumulated such a vast library that eighteen auction sales were necessary to effect its dispersal. Both formed their collections without the slightest method. Richard Rawlinson gathered books from all quarters, and did not forget to sort over the waste paper of chandlers' and grocers' shops: he lived in that glorious age when Departments of State cleared out their 'waste' periodically, and sold it by the ton to shopkeepers. The

Rawlinson collection comprises precious State-papers, volumes of sermons, log-books, Irish MSS. of world-wide renown, broadside ballads, early service-books, needlework samplers, Oriental MSS., almanacks, copper-plates, charters, seals, and medals. But Rawlinson's greatest treasure was the head of Christopher Layer, a Jacobite, who was executed at Tyburn in 1723. His head was fixed on Temple Bar, but was blown down soon afterwards. So precious did Rawlinson esteem this relic that he directed that it should be placed, at his burial, in his right hand.

Richard Rawlinson was an eccentric character. The son of a Lord Mayor of London and in affluent circumstances, he yet preferred to live for many years in a garret in Gray's Inn. He was consecrated a bishop, and passed himself off as a layman. So self-effacing was he that the list of books he wrote or edited is only conjectural. By the terms of his will the recipients of his benefactions 'were never to be natives of Scotland, Ireland, or of the Plantations; nor to be doctors in any Faculty; nor to be married; nor to be fellows of the Royal Society or the Society of Antiquaries'. His idiosyncracies were so well known that a humorous epitaph was composed for him by his friend Blackbourne :

Conditur hic  
nondum mortuus, qui nunquam vixit,  
R. R. R.  
Legum, qui Legem nec novit nec colit, Doctor.  
Qui Bataviam, Galliam, Italiam visit;  
Nec Batavia nec Gallia nec Italia visus:  
Si Tumulum spectes, Coelo vicinus  
si Animum, Terra Defossus.

The first great donation of the nineteenth century was received by bequest of Richard Gough, who died in 1809. Gough was the author of the well-known *British Topography* and *Sepulchral Monuments*. He exhibited literary talent at a very early age. When he was twelve and a half his mother published a *History of the Bible* which he had translated from the French. This work extends to 612 folio pages, and was limited to twenty-five copies. At the age of fifteen he published *The Customs of the Israelites*, translated from the French of the Abbé Fleury. Gough amassed a very large miscellaneous library, of which the most valuable portion, containing the books on English topography and early service-books, was bequeathed to the Bodleian. The rest of his books were sold for nearly £4,000.

Eight years after the reception of the Gough collection the library purchased for £5,444 the fine collection of Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, and liturgical MSS. formed by Matteo Luigi Canonici, a Jesuit, who died in 1805. Canonici began by collecting medals, statues, and books, but, on the Jesuit Order being suppressed at Parma, all his treasures were seized by the Government. Later he collected pictures and relics, but was discouraged by his superior, who thought it presumptuous for a religious to collect such things. He then began to collect MSS. and printed books, the larger part of the former being now in the Bodleian.

Another great purchase made about the same time was that of the library of David Oppenheimer,

chief rabbi at Prague, who died in 1735. The collection contains over 5,000 Hebrew printed books and MSS., and forms, with the other Hebrew books possessed by the library, one of the finest of its kind in existence. The Bodleian collection of Hebrew MSS. is the largest in the world.

The second great donation of the nineteenth century came from Baron Sunderlin, who, in 1821, presented the library of his brother, Edmund Malone. Malone is known to scholars as the learned editor of the third variorum edition of Shakespeare, and to the general reader as the man who whitewashed the painted bust of Shakespeare in the Church of Stratford-on-Avon.

‘Stranger, to whom this monument is shewn,  
Invoke the poet’s curse upon Malone,  
Whose meddling zeal his barbarous taste betrays,  
And daubs his tombstone, as he mars his plays.’

Malone associated with the foremost literary men of his day, and was a friend of Johnson and Boswell. His library, which was almost wholly composed of ‘baggage books’, contained all the Shakespeare folios, many of the quartos, and precious editions of other English dramatists.

The most valuable single collection of books ever received by the library came in 1834, under the bequest of Francis Douce. There is little to be told of Douce himself. He was the author of a book on *The Dance of Death* and the better known *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, in which the connexion of *The Tempest* with the discovery of the Bermudas in 1610 is first pointed out. For



a time he was Keeper of MSS. at the British Museum, but resigned in consequence of a dispute with one of the Trustees. Douce was a collector of the Rawlinson school, and gathered together illuminated MSS., charters, incunabula, ivories, black-letter books, plays, prints, playing cards, bindings, penny histories, farthing ballads, and miscellaneous *facetiae*. But unlike most collectors he read his books, and the notes which he has written on the fly-leaves of them bear testimony to his erudition. It says much for his acumen as a collector that he entirely ignored sixteenth century editions of the classics which appealed so strongly to most of the book-collectors of his day. It is also remarkable that he seems to have had an actual contempt for German books, if one may judge from his scrap-books of prints and title-pages, in one of which there are no fewer than twenty title-pages from valuable original editions of Luther.

The last of the great donations of the century ending with 1837 was the Sutherland collection of prints and drawings illustrating Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* and *Life*, and Burnet's *Own Times*, contained in sixty-one large folio volumes. The collection consists of 19,224 portraits and views of places, the collector's design being to represent every person and place mentioned in the text. There are 743 portraits of Charles I, and 552 of Charles II. It is the finest 'grangerized' collection known, and is said to have cost £20,000.

The greater donations and bequests of the



remaining years of the nineteenth century were the bequest of £36,000 from Dr. Robert Mason, of Queen's College; the Elliott collection of Arabic and Persian MSS.; the Hope collection of early periodicals, and the precious collection of Shelley MSS. and relics given by Mary, Lady Shelley. The valuable collections of Elias Ashmole and Anthony Wood were transferred by the Trustees of the Ashmolean Museum in 1858.

And the generous benefactor is found at this present no less than in the past. Among the gifts of this century may be mentioned those of the Earl of Rosebery, an 'Ex Prize Fellow', the late Mr. P. Murphy, the late Mr. R. Cardwell, and Mr. Vernon Watney; those given by Oxford men to the University Endowment Fund, part of which was devoted towards the building of the great Underground Bookstore; the six thousand Sanskrit MSS. given by his Excellency Sir Chandra Shum Shere, the reception of which has made the Bodleian the chief repository of Oriental MSS. outside Asia; the rare and beautiful editions of early Italian authors presented by Dr. Paget Toynbee; and the splendid collection of Chinese books, numbering seventeen thousand volumes, received from Mr. Edmund Backhouse. But above all is to be recorded the munificence of one of the greatest benefactors of Bodley's Library, Viscount Hythe, who, by providing a new Reading Room, and by fostering schemes for Bodleian extension, has largely increased the Library's sphere of usefulness; while the printed General Catalogue, which he has inaugurated, will in the future extend, still more widely, the Library's pomp of Fame.

PLATE V



BODLEY'S LIBRARY FROM EXETER COLLEGE GARDEN



With the years the older portions of Bodley's Library have not greatly changed. When the visitor enters from the front staircase he will find himself in the Arts End, which was built in 1610. Many of the folio books still retain their original positions, and the benches and counters are as Sir Thomas Bodley left them. As the visitor walks down the room he will see, extending westward, Duke Humfrey's Library, in which students have read for over four hundred years. The timbered roof is one of the most beautiful things in Oxford. At the far end of Humfrey's Library he will obtain a glimpse of the room, built in 1634, where the library of John Selden is preserved. Without, the southern walls are overgrown with ivy, amid which, on the buttresses, the Oxford ragwort throws up its yellow bloom in spring. In summer, from the alcoves of Duke Humfrey's Library, the reader looks down on a smooth lawn, flowering shrubs, and stately trees rising from an ivy-covered mound, at the foot of which a group of red geraniums flames. Birds chirp and sing the summer through, and the lime tree, which pours its scent through the casements of the Arts End, is the haunt of the owl, Athena's bird stationed before the portals of learning.

On November 8, 1602, the Bodleian Library was formally opened. It then contained 2,500 volumes; to-day it contains about 800,000 bound volumes of printed books and 40,000 MSS., representing well over a million separate works. In 1602 its books were housed in Duke Humfrey's Library; to-day they fill the entire block of build-

ings now known as the Bodleian, and the Radcliffe Camera. They have also overflowed into the basements of the Sheldonian Theatre, the Old Ashmolean Museum, and the New Examination Schools. In three hundred years Bodley's Library has grown from modest dimensions to be the second largest national storehouse of literature in the United Kingdom, and year by year a flood of books enters it and is absorbed. No tribunal sits in judgement upon the books that enter. The good and the bad repose side by side, and writers who have been ignored or condemned by their contemporaries await there the final verdict of posterity.



## V

### SOME NOTABLE BODLEIAN BOOKS GENERALLY EXHIBITED

THE oldest manuscript in book form in the library is the Chronicle of Eusebius (*MS. Auct. T.* 2. 26), written in beautiful uncial characters of the fifth century. A slightly later but more famous MS. is the *Codex Laudianus* (*MS. Laud Gr.* 35), a seventh century Graeco-Latin uncial MS. of the Acts of the Apostles, and probably once in the possession of the Venerable Bede. *MS. Auct. D.* 2. 14 is a fine sixth century half-uncial MS. of the Gospels, traditionally connected with the name of St. Augustine of Canterbury.

The Bodleian is rich in early English MSS. Two connected with King Alfred are Gregory's Pastoral Care (*MS. Hatton* 20), which was translated by the King and sent to the cathedrals of England, and Gregory's Dialogues (*MS. Hatton* 76) with a preface by the King. The Winchester Troper (*MS. Bodl.* 775) is a service-book written in the reign of Æthelred the Unready, for whose success in war a prayer is inserted in the text. A precious relic of the reign of Edward the Confessor is the Missal (*MS. Bodl.* 579) given

by Bishop Leofric to the cathedral church of Exeter. One of the great monuments of English history is the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (*MS. Laud misc.* 636), of which six other MSS. are extant, the Bodleian manuscript being specially valuable as it is continued to a later date than the others, the entries from 1122 to 1154 being in contemporary hands. The Bodleian Chronicle was compiled at Peterborough, and has many entries relating to that place.

A precious manuscript, which once belonged to a saint, is *Auct. F.* 4. 32. Apart from its provenance, it is one of the most valuable MSS. in the Bodleian. The volume consists of four parts. The first was written in the second half of the ninth century in Brittany, and contains the Art of Eutyches with Latin and Breton glosses; the second was written at Glastonbury in the eleventh century; the third was written about 820 in Wales, chiefly by a son of Commoneus. This third section contains a medley of useful knowledge with Welsh glosses and notes, and has been described by Professor Westwood as 'the patriarch of all Welsh books known'. The unique interest of the book centres in a drawing on the first page of the first treatise, representing a monk prostrate at the feet of Christ. Above the kneeling figure is the verse:

'Dunstanum memet clemens rogo Christe tuere  
Tenarias me non sinas sorbsisse procellas.'

(O merciful Christ, I beseech thee protect Dunstan myself.

Suffer not Tenarian storms to have engulfed me.)

The writing is contemporary with Dunstan, and it is more than probable that it was written by him.

Another MS. with a similar philological interest is *MS. Bodley 572*, which contains three treatises written in Cornwall in the tenth century. The third treatise is a curious work in Latin, designed to teach that language, and cast into the form of a conversational guide for travellers. The following are examples of the dialogue :

‘ I will get up too : give me my clothes and then I’ll get up.’

‘ Show me where your clothes are.’

‘ They are on the stool at my feet. . . . Give me my doublet that I may dress myself. Give me my shoes so that they may be on my feet when I am walking. Give me my stick. . . .’

‘ Boy, go to the river . . . and bring some clean water so that I may wash my hands and face. . . .’

‘ Boy !’

‘ Yes, Sir, what do you want ?’

‘ I want you to go out to the horses, and bring in two, one for me and one for you, so that we can ride to the nearest town where there’s beer to be had.’

There is quite a pretty little scene where the traveller arrives home and is met by his wife and daughter, from whom he asks kisses. The maid-servant is straightway set to wash his clothes, and a churlish brother, who would not proffer any assistance, has to be politely requested not to stand in the light. The chief interest of the MS. is found in the numerous Cornish glosses which it contains. The ancient language of Cornwall

was akin to Welsh, and survived until the eighteenth century. Three Cornish miracle-plays, written in the fifteenth century, are preserved in *MS. Bodl.* 791.

Another manuscript which once belonged to a saint is the Gospel Book of St. Margaret (*MS. Lat. liturg. f. 5*), a small volume written in a typical eleventh century English hand with miniatures of each of the four Evangelists in gold and colours. Some contemporary verses at the beginning set forth how this particular book was being carried on a journey by a priest, who, having wrapped it in his robe, accidentally and unknowingly dropped it into a river. A knight, seeing the book lying open on the river-bed, plunged in and rescued it. He thought the volume would have been utterly ruined, but 'O virtus clara cunctis, O gloria magna', save for four leaves at beginning and end, the writing and pictures were uninjured. An almost identical account, but with some additional picturesque details, occurs in the life of St. Margaret of Scotland, who died in 1093. In this account the loss of the book was not noticed for several days, and when the volume was discovered on the river-bed the stream was swaying the leaves backwards and forwards so that the pieces of fabric, which were placed between the leaves to protect the illuminations, were washed away. The capital letters of the book are also stated to have had a ruddy hue of gold, a very noticeable feature of the manuscript itself. The little Gospel Book was the Queen's most cherished possession, and was still more dear to her after its

miraculous preservation. It is recorded that her husband, King Malcolm, who could neither read nor write, would kiss any article which he knew his saintly wife particularly valued, and we may well suppose that her Gospel Book must have often received from the lips of the King that token of reverence and love.

Two treasures connected with early English literature are the poems of 'Caedmon' and Orm. Caedmon, who died in 670, was a lay brother of Whitby. His duty was to tend the herds, and he had, it seems, few natural gifts. So when at a feast every one was taking his turn at singing, Caedmon, not having the gift of song, was wont to steal away. One night when he was sleeping a man stood over him and bade him sing. But Caedmon replied that he could not sing, and that it was his custom to leave the feast before his turn came round. Whereupon the stranger again commanded him. Caedmon then obeyed, and straightway received the gift of song. One of his poems is still extant in a manuscript in the British Museum, and is perhaps the only one which has been preserved for us in its original form.

The Bodleian manuscript of 'Caedmon' (*MS. Junius 11*), which contains metrical paraphrases of Genesis and Exodus, was written about the year 1000. Although not by Caedmon it was written under his influence, and is supposed to be the work of a Midland poet. An exceptional interest attaches to this manuscript on account of its illustrations: that which depicts the Ark being,



for instance, a representation of a Danish war galley, the largest vessel known to the artist.

There is no uncertainty about the authorship of the *Ormulum* (*MS. Junius 1*), which was written by an Augustinian monk named Orm. It contains a metrical commentary on portions of Scripture expressed in 10,000 lines of dreary verse. The manuscript is incomplete, and is estimated to have contained originally 80,000 lines. Orm was a very dull poet, but he was a scholar and a grammatical precisian, a fact which makes his poem of great value to the philologist. In appearance the manuscript is remarkable. It is written in a rude hand on long, narrow, irregular strips of parchment. Probably it is in the author's autograph.

A very precious French manuscript is the *Chanson de Roland* (*MS. Digby 23*), the oldest and best of the *chansons de geste*, which, from the magnificence of its diction and its exaltation of patriotism, has been called the *Iliad* of the Middle Ages. The Bodleian MS. is the most ancient copy of the poem extant.

But the illuminated manuscripts form the chief attraction of the exhibit-cases. The Irish school is represented by a copy of the Gospels written by Mac Riagoil, abbot of Birr, who died in 820 (*MS. Auct. D. 2. 19*). Each Gospel has a picture of the Evangelist, combined with the wonderful interlacing ornament which is found in its highest development in the *Book of Kells*. The manuscript is generally known as the *Rushworth Gospels*. *MS. Douce 59* is a beautiful example of a psalter written in letters of gold on dark

purple parchment : it is French work of the ninth century. An English manuscript, considered by William Morris to be one of the finest in existence, is an Apocalypse of the thirteenth century (*MS. Douce 180*). Its miniatures are noteworthy for their extreme delicacy and felicitous invention. The illumination of the miniatures was never finished, so the manuscript exhibits the various stages of the illuminator's art. Some of the miniatures are only in line, others have the gold added, others are lightly washed with body colour, and some are fully coloured. The Ormesby Psalter (*MS. Douce 366*) is a magnificent example of the East Anglia school of illumination of the fourteenth century. This manuscript was given by Robert of Ormesby to Norwich Priory about 1325. It was originally commissioned and begun for some great personage, and afterwards continued for Richard Foliot.

One of the most entertaining illuminated MSS. is the Romance of Alexander (*MS. Bodl. 264*), a poem in the Picard dialect, written in 1338, and illuminated by Jehans de Grise. The illuminations in the text are of great beauty, but the borders are of greater interest because of the trades, sports, and pastimes they illustrate. There is a representation of the game which was the precursor of cricket, and another of a Punch and Judy show. The latter depicts the familiar little theatre with Punch shouldering his stick ; seated before the show is a spellbound group of children. Two fine examples of English fifteenth century work are the Abingdon Missal (*MS. Digby 227*)

and a volume of Hours (*MS. Auct. D. infra* 2. 11), stated to have been once owned by Henry VIII.

Exquisite specimens of the work of the late Dutch school are found in the *Horae* written and illuminated for the Emperor Maximilian and Mary of Burgundy in 1477-82 (*MSS. Douce* 219, 220), the *Horae* traditionally said to have been possessed by Marie de' Medici (*MS. Douce* 112), and a matchless little book of Hours for the use of Ghent (*MS. Douce* 223). The highest development of miniature painting as distinct from illumination may be seen in *MS. Douce* 29, a book of Hours executed about 1525 by Giulio Clovio or his school for Eleonora Gonzaga, duchess of Urbino.

Among the Gough MSS. is an early fourteenth century map of Great Britain. The island is depicted lengthwise, the west coast being nearest the spectator. The roads are marked red, and the distances between towns are indicated. To judge from the number of towns marked in the Midlands and along the east coast, the draughtsman must have been particularly well acquainted with those parts of England. Scotland is treated in a freer manner. Sutherland has the figure of a wolf with the inscription 'Hic habundant lupi' (Here wolves abound), and a little further south is the picture of a deer 'Hic maxima venacio' (Here's the greatest hunting). Loch Tay is described as a lake with three marvels, 'A floating island, fishes without insides, and a strait without wind'. Off the Orkneys is pictured a shipwreck with rafts being thrown overboard. On one of

the rafts is a figure which has been conjectured to be Margaret of Scotland, the Fair Maid of Norway, who mysteriously disappeared in 1290. In the North Sea the artist has depicted a whale, a shark, and a swordfish.

Another valuable and interesting exhibit from the Gough collection consists of portions of two English tapestry maps. In the second half of the sixteenth century William Sheldon, of Weston in Warwickshire, sent a craftsman of the name of Richard Hickes to the Low Countries to learn the art of tapestry weaving with a view to introducing it into England. Richard Hickes was assisted by his brother Francis, and for many years after the death of William Sheldon they continued to practise their art. The results of their labours, so far as we know them, are the three tapestry maps at York, and the two large fragments of two maps at Oxford. The five maps were bought from the Sheldon family by Horace Walpole for thirty guineas; some years afterwards the three perfect maps were presented by him to Lord Harcourt: later they were presented by Archbishop Harcourt to the York Philosophical Museum. The history of the Bodleian fragments is by no means clear, but Gough states that he bought them for one guinea.

The Gough fragments contain parts of the counties of Worcestershire and Warwickshire, and the Thames Valley. The accuracy and detail of the maps are considerable. Stone and wooden bridges are discriminated, churches with spires or towers are so drawn, and parks are prettily



enclosed by palings. Oxford is shown as a city of spires with a large mound to the westward. Unfortunately the portion of the map which contained London was removed by Walpole to decorate a fire-screen; its whereabouts are not now known. The borders of the map, representing allegorical scenes, are very beautifully worked and deserve close inspection.

The Bodleian collection of Oriental manuscripts, which is the finest in Europe, contains many treasures. The manuscript which at the present day attracts most attention is *MS. Ouseley 140*, containing the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khāyyám. The colophon runs :

‘Written by the humble slave, who is in need of mercies of Eternal God, Mahmūd Yerbūdākī. Finished in the last decade of Safar, with blessing and victory, in the year Eight hundred and sixty-five of the Hijrah of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and benediction, and honour; in the capital of Shīrāz.’ (*Heron-Allen.*)

This manuscript, which was written A. D. 1460, is the oldest and best text of Omar extant. Judged by externals its appearance is mean: it measures only  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$  in., and is poorly bound in calf with paper sides. The manuscript itself is written and illuminated in the finest style of Persian art. The paper is powdered with gold, each page is divided into compartments by gold lines, and the headings are in blue, gold, and purple. The two large illuminations are most delicately wrought in blue and gold. It was from a copy of this manuscript that Fitzgerald made his famous translation.



Papyrus fragments do not as a rule provide documents likely to be of great general interest, but two in the Bodleian are very notable exceptions. The first is a small leaf, measuring  $5\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$  in., and containing sayings of Christ (*MS. Gr. th. e. 7 P*). It was found on the borders of the Libyan Desert on the site of Oxyrhynchus: its date is thought to be about 200 A.D. Some of the sayings are not recorded in the Gospels, the most remarkable being, 'Raise the stone, and thou shalt find Me; cleave the wood and there am I'. The sayings are generally accepted as genuine, and not as apocryphal.

The other papyrus text (*MS. Gr. class. f. 66 P*) was found on the same site, but its interest is very different from that of the Logia fragment. It contains an Egyptian boy's letter to his father, written in Greek in the second or third century A. D. The translation runs:

'Theon to his father Theon, greeting. It was a fine thing of you not to take me with you to the city! If you won't take me with you to Alexandria I won't write you a letter or speak to you or say goodbye to you; and if you go to Alexandria I won't take your hand nor ever greet you again. That is what will happen if you won't take me. Mother said to Archelaus "It quite upsets him to be left behind." It was good of you to send me presents on the 12th, the day you sailed. Send me a lyre, I implore you. If you don't, I won't eat, I won't drink; there now!' (*Grenfell.*)

Among the more notable autographs are a Latin exercise-book of Edward VI (*MS. Autogr. e. 2*); a

Latin translation by Queen Elizabeth of a sermon by B. Ochino, written by her, and presented to her brother, Edward VI (*MS. Bodl.* 6); an abbreviated autograph of Shakespeare on the title-page of an Ovid (*MS. Autogr. f.* 1); and a Latin ode by Milton addressed to John Rous (*MS. Lat. misc. f.* 15).

In a separate case are exhibited the Shelley relics, consisting of autograph poems and other works of Shelley, his watch and seals, the volume found in his hand when he was drowned, and some miniatures. The Duchess of Albany recently presented three albums of valuable autographs collected by her late husband, Prince Leopold.

The Bodleian possesses about 5,600 volumes printed before the year 1501. Some of the most interesting of these are always on exhibition, as for example, an *Apocalypse* printed from wooden blocks before the invention of moveable type; the *Mazarine Bible*, perhaps the first book printed from moveable types; Caxton's *Recuyell of the Histories of Troy*, printed at Bruges about 1475; *Exposicio Sancti Ieronimi in Simbolo Apostolorum*, printed at Oxford in '1468'; and the curious little advertisement issued by Caxton in connexion with his service-books.

The most magnificent printed book in the library is undoubtedly a copy on vellum of Pliny's *Natural History*, printed by Jenson at Venice in 1476, and illuminated throughout in the finest style of Italian art (*Douce* 310). The book belonged originally to the Strozzi family, their arms being emblazoned in nearly every border

throughout the volume, although, at some later time and presumably by the Nobili family, most of their arms, which were three crescents, have been transformed into three flaming balls. As the arms and portrait of Ferdinand I, King of Naples, also occur, it is quite possible that the book was a gift from him to the Strozzi. The volume is in a very fine original binding of olive-green morocco decorated with silver bosses and *nielli*.

The Bodleian does not possess any ancient jewelled bindings, of which the finest example in England is perhaps on the Ashburnham Gospels in the British Museum, but an eleventh century binding of engraved brass decorated with an ivory figure of Christ represents this class (*MS. Douce 292*). The Codex Ebnerianus (*MS. Auct. T. inf. 1. 10*), which was re-bound in the eighteenth century in silver, is adorned with a figure of Christ in ivory, 'one of the most exquisitely finished pieces of the later Byzantine work in existence'. A psalter (*MS. Auct. D. 4. 2*) of the thirteenth century has a beautiful binding of silver gilt and translucent enamels, representing the Annunciation and Coronation of the Virgin Mary.

Of the fine English stamped-leather bindings of the twelfth century there is a single example, *MS. Rawl. C. 163*, which contains the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, and is probably London work. There are several good examples of Oxford fifteenth century bindings, such as *Auct. D. inf. 2. 4*, but it is unfortunate that the library possesses not

even a passable example of the class of binding attributed to Rood and Hunte, the first Oxford printers.

Two cut-leather bindings of the fifteenth century are respectively on the case of an Italian portolano (*MS. Douce 390\**), and on a manuscript written at Nuremberg (*MS. Douce 367*). Bindings decorated with panel-stamps are of course numerous. There is in the library a remarkable, not to say scandalous, collection of loose book-covers fastened down into volumes (*Douce bindings b. 1, 2*). The scrapbooks contain two hundred covers, of which nearly half have panel-stamps. These loose covers were received in 1834 with the MSS. and printed books bequeathed by Francis Douce, and among them are the finest James I binding and the only Wotton binding, and that an admirable one, possessed by the Library. A very remarkable binding decorated with panel-stamps in gilt is on a volume of verses composed by Whitinton in honour of Cardinal Wolsey (*MS. Bodl. 523*).

The Library possesses five bindings executed for Jean Grolier, two of them being very fine examples. The earlier of these is of brown calf with a design painted in yellow and red (*Douce S. 528*), the other is of brown calf inlaid with morocco (*Douce P. 16*). Among the English bindings may be mentioned one tooled in gold with the crest of Francis Bacon (4° *V. 2. Art. Seld.*), an elaborate emblematical binding with bosses of translucent enamel executed for presentation to Queen Elizabeth (*MS. Fr. e. 1*), and a Harmony



of the Gospels compiled by Mary Farrar, jun. in 1631, and bound at Little Gidding (*Arch. F. d. 11*).

Embroidered bindings are represented by a magnificent Bible bound in red velvet, and adorned with a graceful design of roses (*Douce Bib. Eng. 1583 b. 1*), and a presentation copy of Bacon's Essays, bound in green velvet, with the Duke of Buckingham's portrait worked in silk (*Arch. Bodl. D. 104*).

In the Picture Gallery are exhibited many interesting objects and a good collection of portraits. The gallery was built between 1613 and 1619 with money given by Bodley for this extension of his library. Originally the gallery had a fine painted wooden roof, and the walls were adorned with paintings of ancient philosophers and writers, but both roof and paintings were removed in 1831. Among the more notable portraits are those of Sir Martin Frobisher, by Cornelius Ketel; an unknown lady, once thought to be that of Mary, Queen of Scots; Sir Kenelm Digby, attributed to Van Dyck; James Edward and his wife Clementina Sobieski; Sir Godfrey Kneller, by himself; Flora Macdonald, by Allan Ramsay; Handel, by Hudson; and Dean Stanley and William Schomberg, Marquis of Lothian, by Watts. The five most interesting and valuable objects exhibited are Sir Thomas Bodley's strong-box, a fine specimen of ironwork; a chair made from the oak of the *Golden Hind*, the ship in which Sir Francis Drake sailed round the world; the writing-desk of the great Clarendon; a fine model in cork



## 66 BOOKS GENERALLY EXHIBITED

of the amphitheatre at Verona by Dubourg, made before the amphitheatre was restored ; and the guitar which Shelley presented to Jane Williams with the verses :

WITH A GUITAR. TO JANE

Ariel to Miranda: Take  
This slave of music for the sake  
Of him who is the slave of thee.

## VI

### RECORDS, CHIEFLY BODLEIAN

THE authentic history of Oxford begins in 912 with an entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle—‘This year died Æthelred, earldorman of the Mercians, and King Edward took possession of London and Oxford and of all the lands which owed obedience thereto’—but not until two centuries later is there any evidence of literary activity there. At the beginning of the twelfth century Theobaldus Stampensis lectured at Oxford, and is reported to have had from sixty to a hundred pupils. Theobaldus was succeeded by Robert Pullus, who spent five years in the town lecturing on theology; by Vacarius, who lectured on Roman law; and by that mediaeval egoist Giraldus Cambrensis, who read his *Topographia* before the townsmen and the scholars. ‘It was a costly and noble act’, says Giraldus, ‘for the authentic and ancient times of the poets were thus in some measure renewed; and neither present nor past time can furnish any record of such a solemnity having ever taken place in England.’

But it is with the commercial side of Oxford literary history that we are at present concerned: chiefly with the stationers and bookbinders. The

earliest document which affords evidence of a Studium Generale at Oxford is merely a deed relating to a transfer of land in Cat Street. The deed is of little interest in itself, but of the seventeen persons mentioned seven are connected with the book-trade—Laurence the Book-binder; Peter, Ralph, and William, illuminators; Thomas the Scribe; and Reginald and Roger, parchment-makers. The date of the deed is about 1180. From that time references to scribes, binders, and illuminators are very numerous. In the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris there is a MS. written by an Oxford scribe in 1212, and at Merton College are several MSS. written by William of Nottingham at Oxford early in the fourteenth century. Other MSS. written at Oxford during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are not uncommon.

Printing was introduced into Oxford in 1478 by the printer who produced an edition of Jerome's *Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*. He was careless enough to omit an x from his date, printing MCCCCLXVIII instead of MCCCCLXXVIII, and has caused bibliographers much trouble in consequence. From 1478 to 1520 twenty-four books were printed at Oxford, some being only represented by fragments. Hales's commentary on the *De Anima* of Aristotle, printed in 1481, is noteworthy for its fine woodcut border, the first use of that ornamentation in England; and the *Constitutions* of Lyndewoode, printed in 1483, is the *editio princeps*. The edition of Cicero *Pro Milone*, which appeared about 1480, has the distinction of being the first

classic printed in England: it is, however, only known from fragments found in the bindings of books.

The most interesting figure connected with the book-trade in Oxford during the early years of the sixteenth century is John Dorne, or Thorne, a Dutchman, who perhaps came to England from Brunswick. Dorne was a bookseller, and his record of daily sales in 1520 is preserved among the MSS. of Corpus Christi College, where it remained for many years unnoticed because it was wrongly described as a catalogue of books at St. Frideswyde's. The record is of great value as showing what books were most in demand at Oxford, and is of especial interest to the bibliographer because of the English books which find a place there. The English language was never completely mastered by Dorne, and in reading his entries one can well imagine him, seated in his shop, pronouncing the titles of his books just as he spelt them: '*Medecines voer hors*' [Medicine for horses], '*Kesmes corals*' [Christmas carols], and '*Frans end Englis*' [French and English]. His entry '*Hackum and Hontigle*' would have puzzled most bibliographers other than Henry Bradshaw, who brilliantly emended it to '*Hawking and Hunting*', one of the books printed by Caxton. He also mixed his languages picturesquely, '*1 vergilius in Englis van 4 quaterni*' [one Virgil in English in 4 quires]. Dorne rarely made a bad bargain, but when he sold the *Sphera parva* and *Sphera Hyginii* for 1s., and failed to receive the money, he added against the entry the expressive word, 'a mocke'.

Another well-known bookseller was Garbrand Herks, a sturdy Dutch Protestant. The first mention of him is in the examination of Horman Men, a bookseller, who confessed that he and his family had eaten twenty legs of mutton, five rounds of beef, and six capons during Lent in the year 1539. Among the company was occasionally Garbrand. At the time of the Marian persecution his cellar in Bulkley Hall is said to have been used as a meeting-house for Protestants. In the reign of Edward VI he held high civic office, and some of his sons had very successful careers.

Among the testamentary records of the Chancellor's Court are many wills of booksellers and binders, with inventories of their goods. The most extensive inventory is that of the goods of Nicholas Clifton, bookseller, 'taken and praised' January 19, 1579, by Henry Mylward and William Smalman. The complete stock-list of an Elizabethan bookseller is a document of some importance. Being in trade in a University town Clifton naturally kept school-books in considerable numbers. He had seven copies of '*Grammers english and latin*' at fourpence each, eighteen copies of *Instructio puerorum* at one penny each, and thirty copies of *Epitome Colloquium* at two shillings. The works of Cato, Ovid, Terence, Lucian, and Erasmus were also stocked in numbers. These were probably new copies, but most of the books included in the inventory were 'second-hand', and the ominous entry occurs 'A hundreth and threscore unperfitt bookes' priced at five shillings. There is a fair sprinkling of French and Italian literature, while



light literature is represented in such entries as '*Sceltons mery tales*', '*Boccas in French*', '*Heptameron French*', and '*A booke of love in French*'.

The earliest bookbinding which can be identified as Oxford work is on a volume of sermons collected by John Felton, vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, and written at Oxford in 1460. This of course is a late example, but the dies impressed on the covers are disposed in the traditional English manner, and one of them is found on an English twelfth century binding in the British Museum. On this Oxford binding, as well as on many others produced there during the fifteenth century, a curious arrangement of little roundels in sets of three is found: °.°. If a binding can be identified as English work and these roundels are found forming part of the decoration, the binding is sure to have been produced at Oxford.

A nearer view of the activities of Oxford binders may be obtained from three volumes of Bodleian *Day-books* and *Accounts* (1613-76). In the two *Day-books* are recorded the volumes sent to be bound, the binders who bound them, books given or promised to the library, details about chaining, second-hand books purchased, and suggested duplicates for sale. Most of the entries in the *Day-books* are lists of books sent for binding, and as the name of the binder is invariably given, the work of seventeen craftsmen can be identified. Their work is very similar in character, but each binder had his own distinctive tools and generally his own little mannerisms which make these later Oxford bindings a very interesting study. Some

of the binders had their initials engraved on their tools, and occasionally a tool of this description may be traced from father to son and from son to apprentice.

Two peculiarities of these later Oxford bindings may be noticed. One is a kind of hatching composed of diagonal lines at the head and tail of the back, the other is the practice of lining the boards with manuscript and printed fragments, material which was easily obtainable in Oxford. The fragments are for the most part valueless, but Joseph Barnes used some leaves of a magnificent Sarum Missal, and another binder a portion of an English Chronicle of the twelfth century. Many early English printed fragments have also been recovered from these bindings. One Oxford binder, Roger Barnes, has been instrumental in preserving for posterity a complete work in his bindings, namely '*Great Brittaines Sunnes-set, bewailed with a shower of teares*'. The author was William Basse, a very minor poet of the seventeenth century, whose book was printed at Oxford in 1613 in a very minor way; it has but twelve leaves, and each page has but a single stanza of eight lines. What misfortune befell this watery work is not known. Apparently all the copies which were not consigned to Jacobean waste-paper baskets came into the possession of Roger Barnes, who wisely used them to line the covers of his bindings. At the present moment there exists only one perfect copy, which was made up from fragments found in Bodleian books. There are fragments in the British Museum, at Christ Church, and at Merton College, while

several are still hidden away in bindings in other Oxford libraries.

The Bodleian books were always bound in sober style with no gilt tooling, but the decoration of the edges of the leaves provided an opportunity for introducing colour. Edward Miles had a fondness for a fine blue edge, Francis Peerse occasionally used an edge of olive green, and William Johnson had a pretty way of indicating the various items in a bound volume of pamphlets: in one such volume containing five small works the first section is coloured yellow, the second red, the third yellow, the fourth with red stripes, and the fifth with red and yellow stripes. Other colours employed for edges were ochre and violet. When it is remembered that the books, being chained, were placed with their edges facing outwards, it will be understood that such variety in colour would have a pleasing effect.

The most skilful and careful of these early seventeenth century Bodleian binders was Roger Barnes, brother of the better known Joseph Barnes, the first University Printer. In the inventory attached to his will is given a complete list of his tools.

<p>‘Inprimis a greate pressing presse, two cutting presses, one plowe to cut books, three oviles [ovals], a paire of Rolles, three phillets, foure small flowers, on[e] beating stone, two beating hammers, some plaining boords, backing boords and cording boords of all sorts, some finishing tooles, five tubs to make pastboords.’</p>	}	<p>£ s. d. 1 15 0</p>
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## 74 RECORDS, CHIEFLY BODLEIAN

The most eccentric of the Bodleian binders was Richard Billingsley, who produced a large number of bindings decorated with original and infelicitous designs; his pride in them is shown by the careful way in which he signed and dated them.

One of these seventeenth century Bodleian binders has had his name published rather widely. On Feb. 17, 1624, the under-Librarian gave to William Wildgoose the following books to bind :

- R 1 William Cowper works. fol.
- R 2 A Guide to Godlynesse by John Downham
- R 3 Petr. de Arrubal Comment. In 1<sup>am</sup> partem Thomæ
- R 4 Martinus de Espilla definitiones rerum et verborum, quæ tractantur de sacra Theologia
- R 5 { Sermones et exhortationes monasticæ  
Authore Laurentio de Portel  
Francis. Sanchez In Ecclesiasten Comment.
- R 6 William Shakespeares comedies histories &c.
- Imperf. R 7 The Theater of honor and Knightwood
- R 8 Polyanthea noua Tom. 2d. fol.

It should be explained that all the above books were sent to the library in sheets: the ready-bound book is a much later development of publishing. The sixth book on the list is the First Folio of Shakespeare, and the R against the entry is Verneuil's note that it was returned by Wildgoose. Until January, 1905, only five of the above books could be traced, the Shakespeare not being one of them.

The First Folio is duly entered in the 1635 Appendix of the 1620 catalogue, but in the 1674 catalogue only the Third Folio of 1663/4 is found, and there is little doubt that the earlier edition was disposed of as a so-called duplicate or 'double book' in 1663/4. On January 23, 1905, Mr. Turbutt, of Ogston Hall, brought to the Bodleian a rather dilapidated copy of the First Folio, which had been in the possession of his family for about two hundred years. His object in bringing it was to seek advice about repairing the book generally. There was very little that was distinctive about the binding, but it was at once noticed that it was contemporary Oxford work, and that the book had once been in a chained library. The entry in the *Day-book* having been called to mind, the first volume on Wildgoose's list, Cowper's *Works*, was immediately taken from the shelves, and it was discovered that not only were the two books in identical binding, but that the inside of their covers had been lined with leaves from the same fifteenth century printed book. This precious volume, which after three hundred years had wandered back so fortuitously, originally stood on the east wall of the Arts End, the part of the library formerly frequented by the junior students and strangers.

So entertaining a work naturally exhibits a good deal of honest wear and tear. The book was minutely examined by Mr. Turbutt with reference to the wear and tear and thumbing of individual pages. This examination established the fact that *Romeo and Juliet* was by far the most read



play, and that the balcony scenes were especially attractive. The next most thumbed play was *Julius Caesar*; the next *Henry IV.* The *Tragedies* were much more popular than either the *Comedies* or *Histories*. In March, 1906, the Shakespeare was bought by public subscription for £3,000 and presented to the Bodleian.

It is to be feared that many other valuable books were disposed of as duplicates, or 'double books', but from the very first the Bodleian was looked upon not so much as a store-house of books at large, as a scholar's library, and there is no doubt that, from a mere student's point of view, the Third Folio was more valuable than the First. Still it need not be assumed that the Curators of the Library recklessly eliminated old editions. To establish this point a few extracts from a list of 'Double books to be exchanged according to the pleasure of the Visitors' in 1613 will suffice:

'The Lawes of free Monarchie two copies the one Lond. 1603 the other Edenb. 1598. *stet.*

Dictionarium Multilingue Hier. Megisen 2 Edit. of Pr. 1603 the one bound in two volumes in vellum the other in one fayrely bound in Leather. That in leather *stet.*

Aegidius Rom. in Physica &c. two Copies the one very old in fo. 1504 A. 4. 1 the other very new Vrsell. 1604 8° A 35 *stet.*

Agricultura da diversi Ven. 1568 4° A. 20 et Ven. 1548 4° A 15 the later may be well spared the former is the better *abalienetur.*

Bell. Explanationes in Psal. the one in Lugd. 1611 the other Lugd. 1613. I knowe no great cause of keep-

ing them both and yet perhaps there may be good reason vpon better consideration *stet*.

Diverse workes of Hunnius in 8<sup>o</sup> may be exchanged or sold because we have all his workes in folio. *abalienetur*.'

The list represents James's recommendations to the Curators. When it was decided to keep both copies, *stet* was generally written after the entry: when the duplicate was allowed, the word *abalienetur* is added. It will be noticed that the better bound copy of Megisen's *Dictionary* was retained, a utilitarian point of view which probably lost to the library many interesting personal copies. The presentation copy of Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* was doubtless alienated in this way. When the Selden bequest was received during 1654-9 a large number of the books must have been duplicates, but the Selden copies seem to have been generally retained. The last entry is the saddest of all: the appraisal of books by their size is the negation of librarianship.

It has already been said that the Bodleian was a chained library. The chains to some extent detracted from the general appearance of the library, while the cost of chaining was considerable. Twenty-four dozen chains cost £4 16s., the clips 5s. a dozen, and the charge for fixing them was a half-penny each. The chains were not removed from the books until 1769, when they were sold at 14s. the hundredweight.

Another expense incurred by chaining books was that of supplying ties or strings for the covers. As a chained book has to be placed on the shelf

with its fore-edge facing outwards, strings are necessary to prevent the edges from gaping open. The material used in the library was grey tape or inkle, which cost about one penny a yard. The stringing and restringing of books (for readers naturally seized the strings to remove books from the shelves) provided the Bodleian binders with much work. On May 5, 1621, for instance,

‘H. B. came to string bookes in which morning he did strung 21 bookes in the afternone all Tostatus which is in 13 volum and besides 13 more

13 Maij

In the morning 38 bookes more at the same time in 8° 12 bookes

The 14 Maij

In the morning 38 bookes in 8°

In the after noone 5 dozens and 3 bookes in 8°.

And it is evident from the Accounts that when readers had finished with their books they did not often tie the strings again. Hence such an entry as this :

‘Item to certaine poore Schollars for helping the Porter to tie bookes against the Visitation of the Librarie <sup>s</sup> 1/-.’

Two of the most curious entries in the Accounts are those relating to the loan of £500 to Charles I in 1642, and to a debt of £450 due to the library from 1613. As late as 1782-3 they are formally recorded :

‘Due from Sir John Bennet on three bonds £450. 15. 0.

‘King Charles the First on Acknowledgment £500. 0. 0.

Sir John Bennet is one of the few sinister characters in Bodleian history. He was a friend of Sir Thomas Bodley, and one of the executors of his will. When he was prosecuted in 1621 for bribery he had still £750 of Bodley's money in his possession. It is remarkable that in 1912, in the little town of Burgfarrnbach, near Nuremberg, there was found under the roof of a workman's cottage a deed by which Sir John Bennet and William Hakewill, as Bodley's executors, sold some property to John Bennet, junior. This deed probably affords fresh proof of Bennet's malversations.

## VII

### THE MEDIAEVAL TYPE OF COLLEGE LIBRARY

WE must now go back some five hundred years and speak of the oldest existing library, not only in Oxford, but in England. The House of Merton was founded by Walter de Merton in 1264. His first intention was to establish a community of scholars at Malden in Surrey, and to set apart for their use a house in Oxford to which they might retire for study. Finally he settled upon Oxford as the permanent home of the community. In the first complete code of statutes, drafted in 1274, no mention is made of a library, but there is a regulation by which the teacher of grammar is to be furnished with a proper supply of books, and the scholars are to have a reader at meal-times. Ten years later the community was visited by Archbishop Peckham, who discovered that the founder's statute relating to the teaching of grammar had been neglected. He thereupon ordered that the works of Papias, Huguio, and Brito be obtained and chained to a table, so that all who frequented the library might consult them. Here, perhaps, is the first reference to a library in



PLATE VI



MERTON COLLEGE LIBRARY



Oxford, and one obviously intended for the junior students.

Part of a catalogue of the library, compiled about 1325, is still preserved. Most of the works are theological, but thirty-nine treat of philosophy and thirteen of mathematics. The record of the mathematical books is interesting, because Merton in the fourteenth century established a special reputation for itself in that science. John de Ashendon, a Fellow and mathematician, predicted the coming of the Black Death 'from an universal Eclipse and the conjunction of three superior Planets, which hapned an. 1345. It did predict as they say, Wars, Dearth, and Pestilence, which afterward accordingly followed, and lasted so long as the effects and Conjunction endured.' The author's manuscript is still preserved in the Bodleian Library.

The books possessed by the College were stored in chests till about 1377, when William Rede, Bishop of Chichester, in addition to a gift of ninety-nine volumes, built a new library at a cost of over £450. This is the library which to-day forms the upper portion of the south and west sides of 'Mob' Quadrangle, and although the interior has undergone some alteration, the building itself and the fittings of the west wing remain much as they were at the end of the fourteenth century; together they present the finest example of a mediaeval library in England.

As regards aspect, Merton Library both conforms to and departs from the mediaeval method of library planning. The authors of the *Archi-*

*tectural History of the University of Cambridge* state that : 'The positions of college libraries offer the very curious facts that the great majority of those which were built up to the beginning of the sixteenth century stand with their lateral walls facing east and west ; those which were built after this to the end of the Commonwealth, including fourteen examples, face, without exception, north and south. . . . Vitruvius lays down the rule that libraries ought to face the east because their use requires the morning light, which will preserve their contents from decay ; whereas, if the room should face the south or the west, they are liable to be damaged by damp and worms, which are nourished by moist winds. It appears probable that the first of these considerations influenced the builders of the early colleges, the inmates of which rose betimes, and would be glad to get as much light as possible for their studies. After the Reformation, however, when . . . the wealth of the country increased, and considerations of personal comfort began to be generally accepted, the library would be placed in the position which commanded the greatest amount of warmth.'

The library consists of two wings lighted by narrow lancet windows, between which low book-cases, solidly made of oak, run towards the middle of the room. The cases have on each side a narrow counter sloping towards thick wooden benches. Originally there were only three shelves to a side, and the books were secured by chains. The fine barrel-roof was constructed in 1502, and in the next century the library was further enriched

by some very beautiful carved panelling and plaster-work. At the same time the large dormer windows were inserted, and the south wing re-furnished. The chains are still attached to the books in one half-case, from the remainder they were removed in 1792.

An endowment for the office of Librarian was provided in 1672 by Dr. Higgs, with the admirable condition that the Librarian should be a Fellow of four years' standing, and should concern himself with the recording of College history, both present and past, and collect references to Walter de Merton, Duns Scotus, Ocham, Brawardine, Swynshed, Bodley, Savile, and other distinguished alumni. After having been approved by the Warden and five senior Fellows the records were to be deposited among the College manuscripts.

The library has been once despoiled, and once threatened with annihilation. Wood records that at the Reformation 'from Merton College Library a cart load of MSS. and above were taken away, such that contained the lucubrations (chiefly of controversial Divinity, Astronomy and Mathematicks) of divers of the learned Fellows thereof, in which Studies they in the two last centuries obtained great renown. So that they being thus taken away and at the disposal of certain ignorant and zealous coxcombs, were condemned for a base use.' This spoliation was, however, a matter of but slight moment compared with the fate which threatened it in 1861 when the authorities of the College were entertaining plans of enlargement. The architect submitted proposals which involved



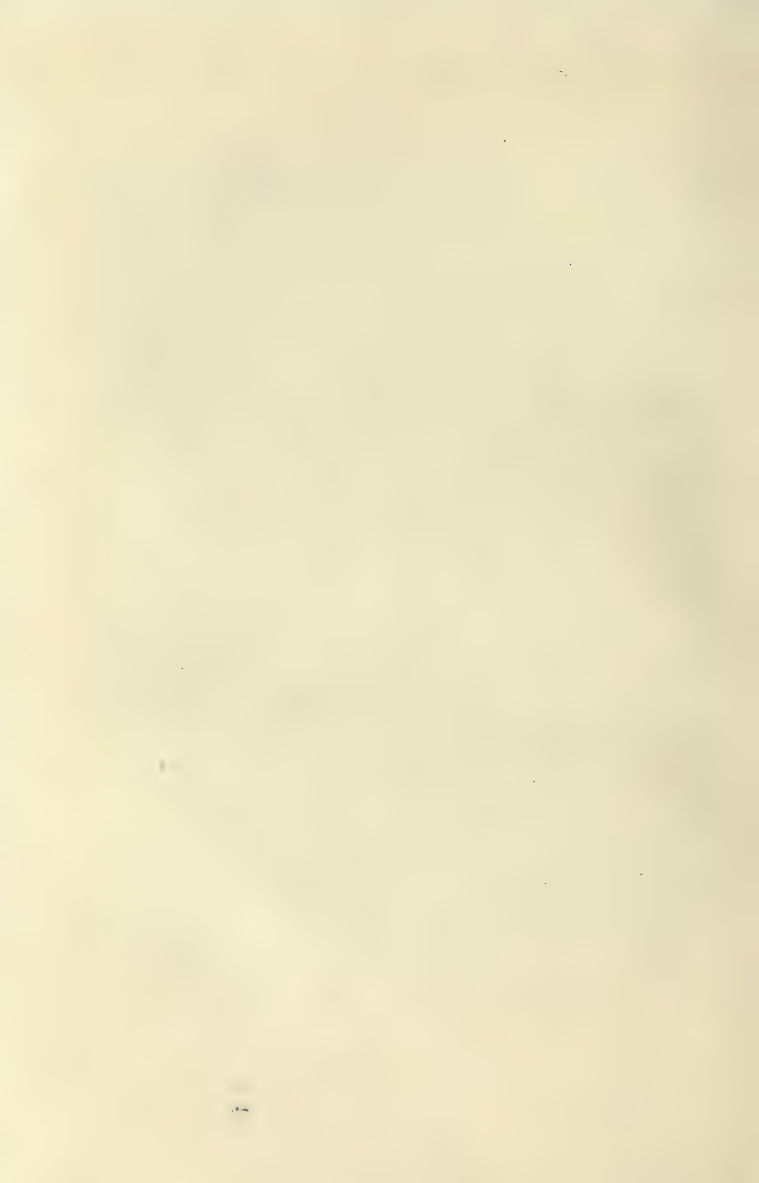
the demolition of a portion of the existing buildings. To these the College replied that they would 'not decline to take into consideration a plan which involves the destruction of "Mob" Quadrangle'. That awful resolution was ultimately thwarted, and the finest mediaeval library in England happily preserved.

As Merton Library represents the Middle Ages, so does the Library of Corpus Christi the Renaissance. Corpus Christi College was founded by Bishop Foxe in 1516, a time when the enlightened teaching of Linacre, Colet, and Grocyn had begun to influence academic studies. The study of Greek, which was not established until the end of the fifteenth century, had become, in Foxe's day, so firmly rooted that the Founder ordained in his statutes that at meal-times, in order that the students 'may not sit mute and speechless, we allow parties sitting at table to use temperate discourse, and that in Latin only, or Greek'. Foxe's deep interest in classical literature is shown in the enumeration of authors to be studied. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, Cicero, Sallust, Valerius Maximus, Suetonius, Theodorus, Isocrates, Lucian, and Philostratus were to be read. On the remaining days of the week Virgil, Ovid, Lucan, Juvenal, Terence, Plautus, Aristophanes, Theocritus, Euripides, Sophocles, Pindar, and Hesiod. On festivals, when some relaxation might be allowed, Homer, the Epigrammatists, and Plato were prescribed. In theology Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, Origen, Hilary, Chrysostom, Damascenus 'and others of that sort were to be studied—not

PLATE VII



CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE LIBRARY



Nicholaus de Lyra, Hugo de Vienna, and the rest'. One hundred years had passed since the commentary of Nicholaus de Lyra had been chained in the chancel of St. Mary's Church, esteemed then so precious that it was inspected yearly by the Chancellor and Proctors.

The personal tastes of the founder are seen in the classical manuscripts, the Aldine and other early editions of the classics preserved in the library. His care for books is also reflected in the statute enacting that 'all persons whatsoever of our College who enter the Library shall shut the books which they find open, and look to the windows, lest from the rising of the wind, or a shower, damage accrue either to the glass or the books. And so often as any one goes out without leaving any person there, he must lock the door.' The library, like that of Merton, is fitted on the stall system, and is one of the most beautiful examples in Oxford. It called forth the admiration of Erasmus, who said that the Trilinguis Bibliotheca of Corpus would attract more students to Oxford than in times gone by had been drawn to Rome. The fittings of the library remain almost exactly as they were in the time of Erasmus, except that the chains have disappeared. The book-cases have been made slightly higher, and frames to contain book-lists were added to the ends of the cases in the seventeenth century.

The treasures contained in the library are very numerous. Among the most important manuscripts are an Irish Missal in its leather satchel; one of the best texts of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*,

finely illuminated; the oldest known manuscript of Florence of Worcester; a copy of Wyclif's Bible; Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* in Anglo-Saxon; the unique manuscript of the *Life and Miracles of Saint Olaf, King of Norway*; and a *Phaedo*, which once belonged to Duke Humfrey. Among the printed books are a copy of that rarity, an example on vellum of Cicero's *De officiis*, printed at Mainz by Fust in 1466; the perhaps still rarer edition of Phalaris printed at Oxford in 1485; a copy on vellum of Tunstall's *De arte supputandi*, printed by Pynson in 1522; the extremely rare first edition of the *Homilies* of 1547; a second folio Shakespeare; and Grocyn's own copy of Suidas's *Lexicon*.

Of the post-Reformation libraries in Oxford, that of St. John's College is the most interesting, and is more than any other connected with the name of one man. The history of St. John's is largely the history of Archbishop Laud, who was elected President in 1611, and some years afterwards Chancellor of the University. Historical criticism has not yet exhausted itself in respect of that pathetic figure. A man irrevocably wedded to 'uniformity in external service', to some historians he appears as a pedant, part Papist, intolerant and narrow-minded; yet others see in his efforts 'the Noblest, the most Zealous, and most sincere Intentions towards Re-establishing the Beauty, the Honour, and the Force of Religion of the Church of England'. During his Chancellorship he reduced the conflicting and partly unintelligible statutes of the University to



a code; as a builder he is remembered as the creator of the fine oak-panelled Convocation House and of the inner quadrangle of St. John's; while his donations to the University Library mark him out as a princely benefactor to the world of letters.

The Library of St. John's was built in 1597 with materials taken from Beaumont Palace, the birthplace of Richard II. It was enlarged by Laud, who inaugurated a Mathematical Library, the cases 'being fitted with shutters made before the shelves to keep both books and instruments in better safety'. The new wing, which most unfortunately was refurnished during the last century, was opened in 1636 in the presence of the King and Queen. In Laud's own account of the proceedings we read :

'When they were come to St. *John's*, they first viewed the New-Buildings, and that done, I attended them up the Library Stairs; where so soon as they began to ascend, the Musick began, and they had a fine short Song fitted for them, as they ascended the Stairs. In the Library they were Welcomed to the College with a short Speech made by one of the Fellows. And Dinner being ready, they passed from the old into the new Library, built by my self, when the King, the Queen, and the Prince Elector dined at one Table, which stood cross at the upper end. And Prince *Rupert* with all the Lords and Ladies present, which were very many, dined at a long Table in the same Room. And I thank God I had that happiness, that all things were in very good order, and that no man went out at the Gates, Courtier or other, but content; which was a Happiness quite beyond Expectation.'

Four years later a different note had crept into the Archbishop's words. On giving his last donation of books to the University Library he reflects how difficult the times had become, and prays that the University may ever flourish, that Religion and Piety and whatever might conduce to good doctrine may increase more and more, and that when the tempest which was sweeping over them was assuaged they might enjoy their studies in peace. On his resignation of the Chancellorship in 1641, 'his great affliction did not trouble him for any one thing more, than that he could be no farther usefull or beneficiall to that place, which he so much loved and honoured'.

It is fitting that the College of St. John the Baptist, 'to which place he ever bore so great a love, and where his Body now remaineth', should be the repository of his relics. In the library are exhibited his Diary and the manuscript of the *History of his Troubles and Trials*, which he wrote during his cruel imprisonment in the Tower. His ebony and ivory walking-stick is there also, as well as the skull-cap he wore on the scaffold. Another precious object exhibited, although whether it belonged to Laud is not quite certain, is a *cento* entitled *The Whole Law of God*, compiled and bound in purple velvet by the community of Little Gidding. A number of beautiful and ancient ecclesiastical vestments are also preserved in the library. These at one time were connected with Laud's name, but there is no evidence that he ever wore them. Besides the Laudian relics, the library is remarkable for

PLATE VIII



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE LIBRARY FROM GARDEN



its eleven Caxtons, and for the number of valuable devotional books it contains. In the latter class may be mentioned a Book of Common Prayer once possessed by James I, on the fly-leaves of which are written the prayers recited by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Williams at the King's death-bed, and an account of his last moments by Sir William Paddy.

None of these treasures were, however, shown to Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, who visited the library in 1710. 'The Librarian, a brisk, lively young fellow, professed to know of no MSS. He shewed us first in hot haste some natural curiosities; fossils, a sheep with two heads and eight feet, &c. But the chief curiosity was a bladder-stone of the size of a hen's egg in a golden box, bearing the inscription "This stone was taken out of the body of Doctor John King, lord bishop of London, descended from the ancient Kings of Devonshire, who deceased London 1621". Then we were shewn thirty-two tolerably large stones, found together in an ox.'

One of the most charming of Oxford libraries, and one of the least frequented, is the Old Library of Jesus College, built and furnished by Sir Leoline Jenkins about 1676. It is entered by a broad, winding oak staircase, and consists of a long, well-lighted room with small windows on either side, and a large window facing the south-west. Two rows of oak book-cases extend the length of the room, each side of a case having four rows of books—the folios ranged below, and the quartos and octavos above. On the side of each case is



a frame, divided into two compartments, designed to contain a list of the books on the shelves. On the right hand, between the book-cases, are low oak benches with panelled backs, narrow counters sloping towards them from the lower row of folios. Above the cases on the left hand runs a gallery, access to which is gained by a graceful wooden staircase with twisted pilasters. The benches and counters are not repeated on this side, but there are tempting and convenient resting-places before the ivy-covered casements which look out on the inner quadrangle across to the beautiful oriel-windowed Hall. In the Long Vacation, when the College is tenantless, the silence will be broken only, at every hour, by 'the sound of many bells'.

The books are mostly of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are stately *Biblia Polyglotta*, learned Commentaries of Thomas Aquinas, Tostatus, and Alfonso Salmeron, long superseded editions of the classics, ponderous works on Antiquities, and dreary rows of Concilia and legal Acta. The walls of the gallery are lined with long rows of miscellaneous books in varying tints of brown, and in all stages of decay. Here are the books of Science, ancient medical treatises, sets of the *Acta Eruditorum* and the *Annual Register*, and numerous volumes of pamphlets bearing on long-forgotten controversies. This, then, is the Old Library, the peace of which is rarely disturbed. It is, in fact, a mausoleum of books long since dead; for can any change of scholarship quicken old Tostatus and raise him

from the grave : will any theologian, save out of mere curiosity, ever pore again over the sixteen folio volumes of Alfonso Salmeron ? It is only by a few antiquaries that the old books are taken from their shelves. The undergraduates never enter : indeed some have never even heard of the Old Library. It is elsewhere, in the Undergraduates' Library, that the present generation seeks learning.

But although the Old Library has long since passed out of the intellectual life of the College, associations of no ordinary kind cling round it. The intellectual development of a Society is to be found there, and many of the books either once belonged to famous men, or were the gifts of great benefactors and appreciative members. The binding of the stately *Biblia Polyglotta* bears the crest of Francis Bacon, the dreary *Concilia* have the book-stamp of Sir Robert Cotton, Tostatus has the small *ex-dono* ticket of Sir Thomas Middleton, the fourteen volumes of Thomas Aquinas were given by Lady Maria Cockayne, and those dilapidated works on art in the gallery have inscriptions showing them to be the gift of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. The copy of Cranmer's *Answer unto a Craftie & sophisticall Cavillation* was given by William Upton, an Oxford blacksmith, who doubtless had some small debt of gratitude to repay. The ultimate fate of the Old Library, so unnecessary and yet so beautiful, is in the hands of a future generation.

The most precious possession of the library is the Red Book of Hergest, a manuscript of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries containing the

wonderful collection of stories known as the *Mabinogion*, a book which occupies a prominent place among the literary masterpieces of the world. This manuscript, together with others possessed by the College, is at present deposited in the Bodleian Library.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century the mediaeval type of library, exemplified so well in the libraries of Merton, Corpus, and St. John's, was about to pass away. The latest example in Oxford is that of Queen's College. It is best viewed in a water-colour drawing by Buckler which was executed about 1820. Therein is depicted a spacious room with ten cases on each side accompanied by the usual counters and benches. But what differentiates this library from the others is the elegance of the fittings. The ends of some of the cases are beautifully carved with designs of fruit and flowers in high relief, some cases have carved canopies, and above the top shelves are small cupboards. The supports of the counters, also finely carved, are for a moment reminiscent of Michelangelo's cases at Florence. Surmounting all is a plastered ceiling decorated with more than usual taste and elaboration.

Such the library was until forty years ago, when, as a former Librarian has said, 'the room seemed a place for study rather than a store of materials'. In 1871 the library was re-arranged, the benches and the counters with their carved supports were taken away, and plain tall cases took their place. The effect is still fine, but unsatisfying to those

PLATE IX



QUEEN'S COLLEGE LIBRARY





who have seen Buckler's drawing. The change of Queen's Library from a place of study to a 'store of materials' was not for the best. The wood-carving is in the style of the English master, Grinling Gibbons, and the work on the Archive doors is worthy of special attention.

The building, which dates from 1691, was rendered necessary by a bequest of books from Bishop Barlow. The next considerable bequest was from Christopher Potter, who gave instructions 'that a certain part of his library shall be stored in the College Archives, not to be readily come at by the younger sort, those authors namely who are commonly called Socinians'. Mr. Clark, a former Librarian, adds that 'the tradition of Provost Potter's caution remains to this day; at least books on demonology and witchcraft, Sir Walter Scott's among the number, are still locked up'. The 'younger sort' had a library of their own before the year 1726. It survived until about 1840, when the books were amalgamated with those of the main collection. One of the books in their library was Caxton's edition of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, printed in 1483. Christopher Potter also left land to produce 6s. 8d. a year, the money to be expended every second or third year on a book for the library—a humble but extremely sensible endowment. A benefaction on a very different scale was one of £30,000 from Dr. Richard Mason in 1841, which had the remarkable condition attached that it must be spent within three years. To accommodate the books purchased with this magnificent benefaction the

cloister below the library was enclosed and fitted with book-cases.

Two other benefactions may be mentioned as showing the affectionate interest taken in the library by members of the College. From about 1683 it became customary for those about to take their B.A. degrees to forgo the usual commemorative dinner in Hall, and to make a contribution, usually five pounds, towards the funds of the library. The following record is from the *Register of Benefactors*. 'The 18th of January 1638. This day was presented to Queen's College these volumes in folio hereunder named, together with a peice of plate . . . from a Cumberland man, that wisheth glory to God and flourishing happiness to this House, but desireth his name may not be enquired after.'

Queen's Library is the largest College library in Oxford, and, as might be expected, contains many treasures. Among them are the first four folios of Shakespeare, the first folio being Garrick's own copy; a beautiful copy of Lyndewoode's *Constitutiones*, printed at Oxford in 1483; Caxton's *Tully*, *Faytts*, and Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; a fine collection of English proclamations; Eggestein's Bible; and a small volume of several precious tracts such as the unique *Goostly psalms* of Coverdale, printed by John Gough about 1539, an A B C printed by John King, and *The Pilgrimage of Man* of about 1525. There is also a New Testament, which formerly belonged to Queen Elizabeth, bound in red velvet decorated with inlays of various coloured leathers tooled in gold—a very

fine example of a rare class of binding. A minor curiosity possessed by the College is a Book of Common Prayer 'printed at Verdun in 1810, for the use of English prisoners detained there. It has an expressive blank where the prayer in time of war should stand, and another where King George should vanquish and overcome all his enemies'. The French could hardly be expected to assist in their own defeat by printing prayers which so ardently desiderated it.

## VIII

### EIGHTEENTH CENTURY LIBRARIES

So far only libraries of the mediaeval type have been described, Merton representing the early style, and Queen's that style beautified and refined. A change of dynasty brought with it new forms. Two admirable examples of Georgian Libraries, All Souls and the Radcliffe Camera, are to be seen in Oxford. All Souls College, or as it was originally called the College of all the Souls of the Faithful Departed, was founded in 1437 by Archbishop Chichele. He had been to a large extent responsible for the war with France, and with a view to atonement founded certain religious and philanthropic societies, among which was All Souls. The Old Library, which was built in his time, but refitted and decorated by Robert Hoveden in the reign of Elizabeth, is worth visiting for its fine fireplace, panelling, and stucco roof; when the books were removed to the Codrington building in the eighteenth century it was 'fitted up in a very elegant manner in the Gothic taste, and deservedly esteemed one of the curiosities of the town'.

The present library is the building forming

PLATE X



ALL SOULS COLLEGE LIBRARY





the north side of the back Quadrangle, the architect of which, Walpole says, 'has blundered into a picturesque scenery, not void of grandeur, especially if seen thro' the gate that leads from the Schools'. The foundation is due to the munificence of one of the most picturesque Oxford figures of the reign of Anne, Christopher Codrington. The son of a Governor of the Leeward Islands, he was born at Barbados in 1668, and educated in England, graduating at Christ Church and becoming a Fellow of All Souls in 1690. During his Oxford career he established for himself a reputation as a fine scholar and man of letters. Later he fought gallantly under William III on the Continent, and on his father's death succeeded to the Governorship of the Leeward Islands. At that moment the post was one of supreme importance, for England was at war with France, and the Leeward Islands were the key to the whole of the West Indies. He at first enjoyed some successes, but later, although distinguishing himself in the action, met with defeat at Guadeloupe in 1703. So greatly was he mortified by this reverse that he retired to his estates in Barbados, where he spent the rest of his life among his books, making a special study of the Fathers and meditating much on monasticism. Dying in 1710, he bequeathed to his College £10,000 and £6,000 worth of books.

The foundation-stone of the Codrington Library was laid six years later, and Hawksmoor, the clerk of Sir Christopher Wren, was appointed architect. On its completion the great lawyer,

Blackstone, occupied himself with the arrangement of the books, and spent several years in the work. The library, which is a lofty room with book-cases upon the walls only, is one of the most beautiful of English buildings in the Italian style. But in spite of its nobility the chill of the law hangs round it. The Codrington possesses about 80,000 volumes, and is particularly rich in legal and historical literature. Among its rare books are some examples of bindings executed for Jean Grolier; a matchless copy on vellum of the Lathbury printed and bound by Rood and Hunte at Oxford in 1482; and the Jerome, printed at Oxford in '1468'. The plans of Sir Christopher Wren for re-building London after the Great Fire are also preserved there.

All Souls Library is connected with one of the most remarkable schemes ever formulated with regard to Oxford Libraries. The late C. H. Robartes, Fellow of All Souls, desired to develop his college library 'in connexion with the University Library System'. He proposed nothing less than the absorption of All Souls into the Bodleian. The revenue of the College, then about £20,000 per annum, was to be devoted to library purposes. The Bodleian Librarian was to be *ex officio* Warden of All Souls with a salary of £1,500. There were to be six sub-Librarians at a salary of £600, who were to represent various special departments in the University Library System, and four Professors with salaries of £900: one of Bibliography, one of Literature, and two of Law. As the elimination of the Fellows of the College

would leave the College tenantless, Mr. Robartes suggested that the Curators of the Bodleian might have rooms there. The beautiful college chapel he wished to devote to the use of non-collegiate students. This extraordinary proposal was formally presented in print to the Bodleian Curators, who very wisely replied that they could take no active steps in the matter, and must wait for proposals to be made to them by the College. If one may hazard a wide conjecture, the proposals were never made.

But Oxford students are indebted to Robartes for his successful efforts to add to the Codrington a reading-room where members of the University and others might be allowed to consult books under certain conditions, and for his recommendation that the library funds should be devoted to making the library as perfect as possible in the department of Law. To-day the Codrington is the finest law library in the kingdom, outside London, and the privilege of reading there is one which is valued very highly by Oxford students, and one for which they are correspondingly grateful.

From the quadrangle of All Souls may be obtained a fine view of the most important and imposing of Oxford Georgian libraries, the Radcliffe Camera. Dr. John Radcliffe, the founder, was a member of University College. Without deep learning, but with more than ordinary wit, sound common sense, entertaining conversation, and an honest contempt for the practitioners of his time, Radcliffe became a famous society doctor,

and amassed a large fortune. In 1703, after a severe illness, he became very devout, and gave much to charity. He enlarged University College, founded a travelling Fellowship, and made considerable donations to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. On his death in 1714 his fortune was placed in the hands of Trustees to be devoted to charitable purposes. With this money the Radcliffe Infirmary, the Radcliffe Observatory, and afterwards the Radcliffe Library were built. The sum of £40,000 was devoted to the acquisition of a site and the erection of the library, but with the condition attached that building should not be begun until after the death of his two sisters.

To Radcliffe's contemporaries it appeared strange that one whose external equipment consisted of some phials, a skeleton, and a herbal, and who had the reputation of being little conversant with books, should become the founder of a library. The foundation-stone was laid in 1737, and ten years later the building was finished. James Gibbs, the architect, commemorated his work by publishing a volume of drawings of the library, which was opened on April 13, 1749, in the presence of 'the greatest number of the nobility, gentry, and members of the University that was ever known on any occasion'. Gibbs's wooden model of the Camera has recently been presented to the Bodleian by Viscount Dillon. It was originally preserved at his seat at Ditchley, where it was found to be, by successive generations of children, an admirable substitute for a doll's house.



PLATE XI



RADCLIFFE CAMERA



The library is a circular building in the Italian classical style, and consists of one room supported on an arcade and surmounted by a dome. The arcade was furnished with iron gates 'to enclose and preserve that place from being a lurking Place for Rogues in the Night-time, or any other ill Use'. The space thus enclosed, now a book-store, was originally an ambulatory. The iron fence which now surrounds the Camera is of a later date; eighteenth century engravings show the building quite unconfined, and in the ample space between St. Mary's Church and its paved walk pompous dons and graceful ladies are seen engaged in conversation and academic courtesies. The interior of the dome was until quite recently an habitation for the fowls of the air. About four years ago it was thought advisable, on account of a defective flue, to examine thoroughly the interior of the dome, when the discovery was made of an accumulation of two hundred and twenty-six bushels of leaves and twigs brought thither by birds. Access to the dome has now been denied them, wire-netting having been placed across the apertures of the cupola.

It was the intention of the Trustees to place in the library modern books in all faculties and languages not in the Bodleian. A portion of the endowment was employed in purchasing the Fraser, Kennicott, and the Sale Oriental collections. Blackstone refers to a 'plan which has long employed the attention of the noble and honourable trustees of the Radcliffe Library in Oxford, for transferring to that august edifice, all the MSS.

which are at present the property of the University, and appropriating it for the future to the reception of MSS. only: a design, which will exhibit in one view, and preserve with the utmost security, that inestimable treasure which now lies inconveniently dispersed; will give room for the daily accessions of printed books to the Bodleian Library; will perpetuate, by a proper arrangement, the memory of former benefactors to letters, and be the means of exciting new ones; and will in the end do the highest honour to the name of the munificent founder, by stamping a peculiar and most useful character of its own on that noble structure, which it ever must want if considered only as a supplement to former Libraries'.

This scheme, an excellent one of its kind, would not have relieved the Bodleian to any appreciable extent, and nothing came of the proposal. But there was certainly no need of two independent libraries, literally within a stone's-throw of each other, which, in the course of fifty years, were found to be rapidly amassing duplicates. So by a resolution dated 1811 it was resolved that the purchase of books for the Radcliffe should be confined to works in medicine and natural science.

Fifty years later, when the Museum in the Parks was built, all the scientific books were removed there, the manuscripts being deposited in the Bodleian on revocable loan. The Radcliffe Camera was then handed over to the Bodleian authorities, who transformed the basement into a store-room for books. From that day to this

it has been the chief repository of the books supplied to the Bodleian under the terms of the Copyright Act, and has now become so congested that a large underground chamber, capable of storing a million and a half octavo volumes, has been constructed on the north side. The Camera reading-room, which contains a large reference library, is for the most part frequented by undergraduates and ladies who are working for the 'Schools'.

But to Oxford men the Radcliffe Camera will always be something more than a reading-room and a store-house. Its dome, rising majestically among the surrounding buildings, is perhaps the object which most arrests the eye of one who views Oxford from her encircling hills. And Radcliffe Square, retired from the noise of busy streets and within the very heart of the University, makes no ordinary appeal to the artistic sense. It is best seen on a moonlight night from the corner where Hertford College adjoins All Souls. A flood of yellow light pours from the High Street along the narrow lane beside which rises the graceful spire of St. Mary's. On the right hand is the severe outline of the Bodleian, and further off the grey mass of Brasenose College. Within the Square the great library lies calm and peaceful under an illumined sky. Amid such dignity and in such surroundings

'We men could find it in our thirsty souls  
To envy with a strange, new misery  
The guarded coolness of thy stony bed.'



The fine eighteenth century Library of Christ Church was designed by Dr. George Clarke. It was begun in 1716, the upper portion not being completed until 1761. The lower part was enclosed and made into a picture gallery a few years later. The Old Library, which was originally a monastic refectory, was rebuilt on the south side and converted into rooms in 1775; its fine perpendicular windows can still be seen on the north side above the Allestree Library.

In the Lower Library, preserved as a separate collection, are the books bequeathed to Christ Church by Robert Burton, the author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*—a book beloved of Samuel Johnson and Charles Lamb. A portion of his library is in the Bodleian, Burton providing in his will that if there were 'any bookes the Universitye Library hath not, lett them take them'. As might be expected, he was a collector of a mass of popular literature which made the bequest, at first little esteemed, particularly acceptable to future generations. So large a number of comedies, tragedies, and other 'baggage books' were received by the Bodleian that the Librarian of that time, John Rous, did not deign to enter them separately in the Donation Register, or to keep them together as a collection. Fortunately, for the most part, they have Burton's name or initials on their title-pages, and may thus readily be identified. A curious symbol, composed of three r's, *r<sub>rr</sub>*, is also found in most of the books. The present Regius Professor of Medicine, Sir William Osler, has performed a pious duty in compiling

a list of Burton's books now known to be in the libraries of Christ Church and the Bodleian. In all they number about a thousand.

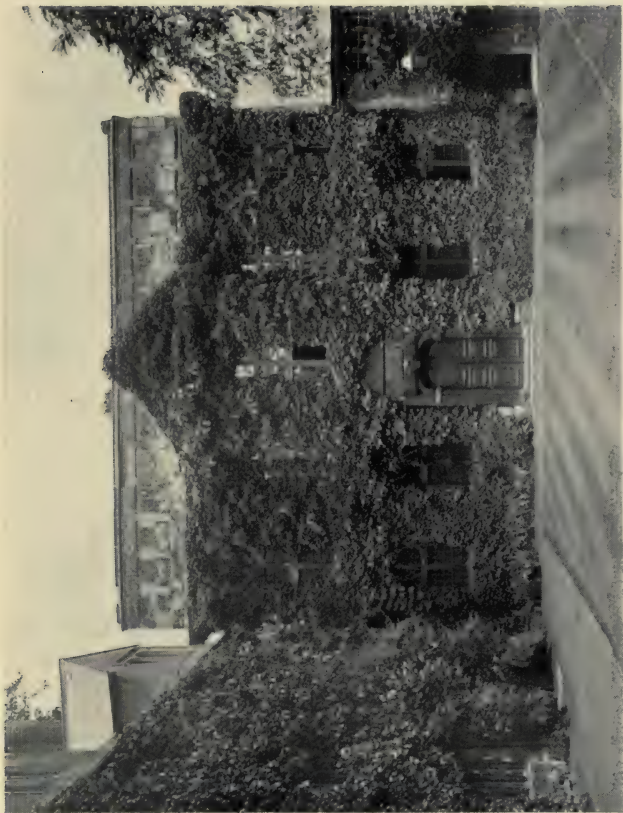
In the Upper Library of Christ Church are exhibited some interesting manuscripts from the Wake Archives, among them being a service-book written for Cardinal Wolsey, and the letter of Charles I demanding the expulsion of John Locke. Besides these there is a Latin exercise-book of the Duke of Gloucester, son of Queen Anne, who died in 1699 at the age of 10. The book is oblong in shape: on the left-hand page are the corrections and remarks of the Duke's tutor, Bishop Burnet. The right-hand page is divided into three columns containing an English version, Latin translation, and a fair copy of the latter; all written in a very youthful hand. Each of the exercises is carefully dated. In one place the boy translates 'Those princes who in their ravenous temper devour the people' by 'Ii Principes qui suâ rapacitate populum deglubint', on which the Bishop comments with gentle satire 'Deglubint, Sir, is as much as to say, I have nothing in my head but going to Windsor'.

The chief interest of the library, however, centres in the paintings and drawings of Old Masters, the finest of which were given by John Guise, a general of the British Army, who fought most gallantly at Cartagena. When the paintings were received many were found to be in unsound condition. These were given for repair, as Walpole relates, to a local picture-cleaner, whose son, exceeding his instructions, *repainted* and

'utterly ruined them'. Among the paintings may be mentioned a fine Madonna and Child by Piero della Francesca, fragments of a Raphael cartoon, and an odd picture by Caracci in which the artist's family is caricatured as the employés in a butcher's shop.

But more interesting are the drawings. There are examples of the art of Michelangelo, typical studies by Leonardo da Vinci wherein art and science are intermingled, the annotations being written in that strange inverted script which can be read only by the aid of a mirror. A drawing by Albrecht Dürer for a sepulchral monument is exceedingly fine, and some studies by Lippi are doubly interesting because they have been detached from one of the portfolios of the great Vasari. Among others may be specially mentioned a charming drawing in carmine of the Virgin and Child by Raffaellino del Garbo, and a beautiful head of a woman on whose face rests the inscrutable smile which the women of Leonardo wear—it is by his pupil Boltraffio. There is also a valuable pencil-sketch by Van Dyck of the princess Mary, a study for the group of the children of Charles I preserved at Windsor.

Within the precincts of Christ Church is the least frequented library in Oxford. Dr. Richard Allestree, Regius Professor of Divinity, in 1680 conveyed the whole of his books to the University in trust for the use of successive Regius Professors of Divinity. The University, by the deed of trust, was to exercise the right of visitation, but no money was left for the maintenance of the



ST. EDMUND HALL - CHAPEL AND LIBRARY





library, nor has provision ever been made for it. In a secluded cloister, within a small chamber and a long narrow room paved with red tiles, the books, unvisited, pass their days in dusty desolation and unbroken peace. Only the Professor has the right of entry, a right probably exercised but seldom by one whose duty it is to interpret the living Word, and who may well hesitate to explore the wastes of long-exhausted theological controversies.

The eighteenth century Library of St. Edmund Hall is worth visiting for the sake of its picturesque appearance and its diminutive size. It is situated above the chapel, and is approached by a narrow and tortuous staircase, on which, unless the visitor follows his guide very closely, there is some likelihood of his being temporarily lost. The library is the smallest in Oxford—a little room with a gallery running round. Originally the books were all on the walls, but recently some transverse cases have been added, thus rendering perambulation difficult. It is a library for the sedentary only.

Besides the libraries already mentioned there are one or two better known for some special objects of interest than for their chief collections. In Pembroke College Library are the desk at which Samuel Johnson wrote his *Dictionary*, and the original manuscript of his *Prayers and Meditations*, the latter given by George Strahan, who placed it there so that its authenticity might never be called in question. In it are recorded the resolutions which Johnson made several times in his life—‘To rise early. To study religion. To go to Church. To read the Bible through the

year, in some language. To keep a journal. To put rooms and books in order. To avoid idleness'—resolutions often forgotten, constantly renewed. On September 18, 1764, he wrote: 'This is my fifty-sixth birth-day, the day on which I have concluded fifty-five years. I have outlived many friends. I have felt many sorrows. I have made few improvements. Since my resolution formed last Easter, I have made no advancement in knowledge or in goodness; nor do I recollect that I have endeavoured it. I am dejected, but not hopeless'. Sixteen years later, when he was 72, he made similar resolutions for the New Year, but on Good Friday he adds, 'I forgot my prayer and resolutions, till two days ago I found this paper'.

The Library of Pembroke College was originally a room over the south aisle of St. Aldate's Church. In 1710 it was removed to what is now the Dean's lecture-room, and has finally found a home in the refectory of Broadgates Hall, the only remaining building of the foundation which Pembroke College absorbed.

Admirers of Gilbert White may be interested to know that a chair which belonged to him is in Oriel College Library, and that the table at which he is said to have written his *Natural History of Selborne* is in the Common Room. White was at one time Junior Proctor, and the Diary which he kept during his period of office is entertaining reading. He liked a bowl of honest rum-punch, appreciated 'mountain wine, very old and good', played his game of cards for small stakes, dutifully showed his friends and relations the sights of the

University, and could so far unbend as to spend 1s. 6d. in 'Going with ladies to puppet-shew'.

In the library is also preserved a flag—'This emblem of a great idea successfully accomplished, was the first flag of The British South Africa Company to wave in their territory. It was hoisted on the Hospital Hill, Fort Tuli, on Nov. 12, 1891, to welcome Mr. Cecil Rhodes on his first visit to the Country, saved for the Empire by his sole efforts.'

One other relic, even though it is in no way connected with eighteenth century libraries, may perhaps be mentioned here on account of its great literary interest. In the Library of Balliol College lies an old yellow book,

'Small-quarto size, part print part manuscript,  
A book in shape but, really, pure crude fact'.

The contents :

'A Roman murder-case :

Position of the entire criminal cause

Of Guido Franceschini, nobleman,

With certain Four the cutthroats in his pay,

Tried, all five, and found guilty and put to death

By heading or hanging as befitted ranks,

At Rome on February Twenty Two,

Since our salvation Sixteen Ninety Eight :

Wherein it is disputed if, and when,

Husbands may kill adulterous wives, yet 'scape

The customary forfeit.'

The Old Yellow Book is the material, unpromising enough at first sight, from which Browning fashioned his finest, most tragic, and most consis-

tent work, *The Ring and the Book*. The volume is really a *dossier* of pleadings of the various parties in a murder-case, a mere bundle of legal memoranda which Browning has transformed into an immortal work of art.

Of the accumulated treasures in Oxford Libraries, treasures which are surpassed by those contained in but a few of the capital cities of Europe, this is not the place to speak at length. Stored there is the literature of the world, cut in hieroglyphics on stone, inscribed on sun-baked tablets, written on perishable papyrus or enduring parchment, and latterly committed to print on paper. The source and progress of the stream of learning, fed by many tributaries, may be traced in these Bodleians. Four thousand years before our era the source welled up, gathering itself into a pellucid stream in Hellas, and spreading through the civilized world under the domination of Rome. Stemmed by world-catastrophies, checked by Goth and Hun, the divided stream strained along, released now by the missionary zeal of Irish monks, now by some scholar-prince like Charlemagne. Deepened by every revival of learning, again and again through the ages it has broadened into fair-flowing expanses, until at the Reformation it burst forth, a united living flood, broad and deep and strong. Through these Bodleians the stream of learning ever flows towards its destined end as to some long-sought sea.

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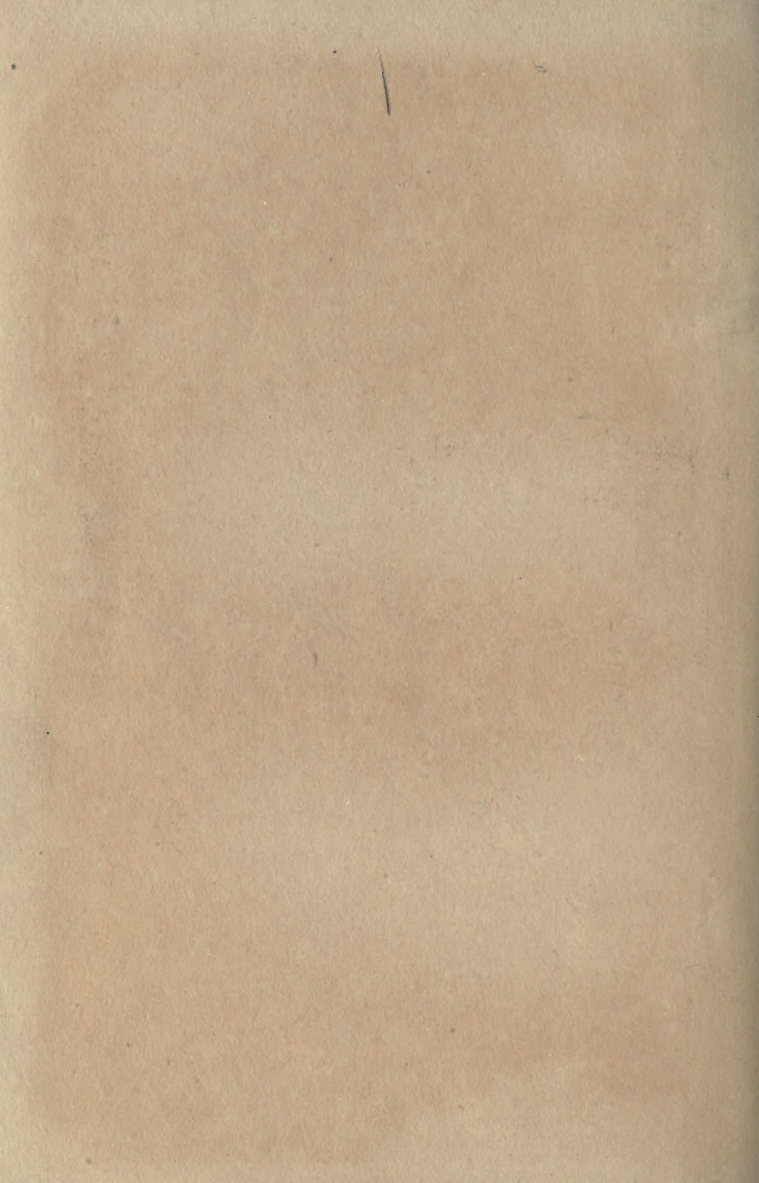
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